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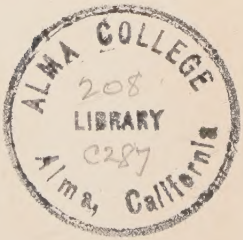

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The False Decretals.

BY THE REV. RICHARD F. CLARKE, S.J.

THE False Decretals supply to Protestant controversialists one of their most serviceable weapons. The fact that there exists a collected body of documents, many of them strongly asserting the claims of Rome and the Roman Pontiff, of which a large proportion are undoubted forgeries, gives a handle to the enemies of the Catholic faith of which they are not slow to avail themselves. If it were true that the modern system of Church government is built up in great measure of these untrustworthy and misleading documents, our opponents would have a strong argument in their favour. If the Popes had invented these forgeries in order to advance their claims to universal dominion (as Protestants assert that they have), then we should at least have to admit that unscrupulous audacity had at one time prevailed at Rome. If the Popes had adopted them, knowing or suspecting them to be forgeries, we should be obliged to allow that the Vicars of Christ had descended to the use of shameful means to strengthen their own power. Even if the Holy See had taken them under its protection, in ignorance of their true character, and had in all good faith availed itself of them in the development of doctrine or of practice, we should look with just suspicion on any dogma, law, custom, or usage that rested only on such a foundation, and its erasure from the statute-book, with all the consequent regulations or doctrines that had followed from it, would be a matter of immediate necessity.

Happily, the False Decretals have had no such influence on the legislation of the Catholic Church. They have introduced no dogma, no law, no custom, that did not exist previously. They were never formally recognized by any of the Popes, and it can be proved with certainty that the Holy See knew nothing of them until many years after they were compiled, much less had any sort of part in their compila-

tion. If extracts from them occur in some Papal documents, we must remember that they were inserted in perfect good faith, for the authenticity of the False Decretals was widely credited, and at last was taken for granted at Rome itself. The False Decretals were drawn up, as we shall see presently, not in Rome, but in Western France. Their compiler was no member of the Papal Court, but a provincial Bishop, or some one acting under his orders and seeking to advance his cause. Though they go by the name of "The False Decretals," yet a great portion of them are genuine documents, and those which are forgeries embody the traditional teaching of the Popes whose names are attached to them. They did not introduce even into the discipline of the Church anything that was unknown before, but simply sought to attach the weight of Papal or Conciliar authority to customs which generally prevailed, but which many questioned as lacking any sufficient sanction from the Holy See.

In order to understand the position of the False Decretals, we must ask our readers to cast a rapid glance over the ecclesiastical history of the time, and especially of the Church in Western Europe. The latter portion of the reign of Louis le Débonnaire was a time full of all sorts of miseries to the Empire of the Franks. The pious, well-meaning, but feeble Emperor lent too ready an ear to the foolish counsels of favourites. In 817 he portioned out his kingdom among his three sons, and associated the eldest, Lothaire, in the Government. But the birth of a fourth son in 823 (afterwards Charles the Bald) led to a fresh partition of the Empire, and this caused great dissatisfaction among the elder brothers. Ten years later (A.D. 833) Lothaire took advantage of the disturbed state of the kingdom and the weakness of the Emperor's policy to accuse his father, before an assembly of bishops, abbots, and nobles, of various crimes against Church and State. The poor old King, broken down by the ingratitude of his children and the responsibilities of empire, and full of self-reproach because he had not succeeded in carrying out measures which his feeble will was insufficient to enforce, nor prevented crimes which were in fact beyond

his control, humbly confessed with many tears the crimes laid against him; and was condemned to a lifelong penance and perpetual seclusion from the affairs of State in the Abbey of St. Médard. The official president of the assembly where this iniquitous proceeding took place was Ebbo, Archbishop of Rheims, who as metropolitan of the province, acted as the spokesman of the assembled prelates and seigneurs, and pronounced the sentence against the King. The conduct of Ebbo was the more disloyal, as he had been Louis' foster-brother, and had by the royal influence been raised from being a peasant's son to a high position in the Empire, having been appointed soon after his ordination to be keeper of the royal archives of the province of Aquitaine, and subsequently (in 816) elected, with the universal acclamation of the clergy and people, to the archbishopric of Rheims. In this see he had shown himself a zealous reformer of abuses, and a devoted and exemplary Bishop. Six years later, he was sent by the King to Denmark as royal ambassador and apostolic missionary, and there had great success in the conversion of the pagans. But the temptation to take the lead in a great political struggle proved too strong for him: doubtless he persuaded himself that he was acting in the best interests of the Church in getting rid even by such questionable means of a Prince whose weakness was unable to meet the various abuses which prevailed.

This cruel treatment of their monarch soon caused a reaction in favour of Louis, whose younger sons, disgusted with the arrogance of their eldest brother Lothaire, rose against him, restored the King to liberty, and drove Lothaire into exile, whither he was followed by most of the Bishops who had sided with him. But the leader among them, Ebbo, was seized on the way, and, after a short imprisonment, was compelled to read from the pulpit of the Church of St. Stephen, Metz, a retractation of his conduct and a public declaration that the proceeding against the unhappy King was unjust from beginning to end. But this was not sufficient to atone for what he had done. He was summoned before a synod at Thionville in 835, to be tried for his treason. Here he begged, for the honour of the episcopate, that he might be tried before

bishops and not before laymen. This request was granted: he was allowed to choose three bishops as his judges before whom he secretly confessed his ill-deeds, and he afterwards read before the assembly a humble acknowledgment of his guilt, in which he renounced his episcopate and declared his see vacant. He was accordingly deposed and condemned to perpetual imprisonment in a monastery.

This act of deposition was by canon law null and void, for it was not only involuntary on the part of Ebbo, who adopted this as his best means of evading worse misfortunes, but it had no legal validity, as having been concluded without the Pope's consent. The omission was the more serious because Ebbo was not only metropolitan, but also Legate of the Holy See in Western France. He could therefore only be judged by a special delegacy appointed by the Pope: and he remained after his abdication and in spite of his own resignation *de jure* Archbishop of Rheims.

From 835 to 840 Ebbo spent in a sort of honourable imprisonment in various monasteries, at Fulda and elsewhere; but in 840 Louis died, and Ebbo, repairing at once to Lothaire at Worms, obtained from him his reinstallation in the see of Rheims. But some judicial form was considered necessary, and Lothaire summoned a council of twenty bishops, had him absolved, and restored him solemnly to his episcopate. He was received with triumph at Rheims; but two years later, his episcopal city having been apportioned to Charles the Bald, he was again compelled to flee, and after a visit to Rome, where he is said to have been coldly received by Pope Sergius, he was nominated by Louis of Germany to the see of Hildesheim, with the consent of the Pope and of the Bishops of the province of Mayence, and there he remained from 842 until his death in 851.

From this outline of Ebbo's history the reader may gather what must have been the condition of the diocese which he governed. Rheims, like all the dioceses of Western France, was indeed in a miserable plight during the first half of the ninth century. The civil wars of France had been productive of many evils, of which not the least was the decay of ecclesiastical discipline. The Bishops, in spite of themselves, had been often almost compelled to take part in the

struggle, and had done their best to allay the violence of party feeling and the rancour of political hatred. But though they were generally peacemakers, they were sometimes themselves swept away by the stream, and appear in the character of fierce partisans of one or other of the contending princes.

But this was not the end of the miseries of the Church of France. The continual civil wars left the country exposed to the ravages of the Northmen, who sailed up the Seine and the Loire, pillaging at their pleasure, and finding in the monasteries a comparatively easy prey. We find them penetrating as far as Paris in 851, and to Aix-la-Chapelle, Rouen, Nantes, and Blois. The armies which marched to meet those barbarians were as fatal to the countries through which they passed as the Northmen themselves, and abbots and bishops must perforce fortify and fight if they were to have any hope of security.

In such a disturbed state of things, one can easily imagine that ecclesiastical discipline became almost an impossibility. Life, property, everything was insecure, and the universal tendency of mankind to cultivate under such circumstances that charity which not only begins but ends at home, man fested itself throughout France, and especially in those western provinces which were, more than the rest of the country, exposed to the ravages of war. The clergy ceased to obey bishops who could not or would not help them. Bishops fought for Lothaire or Louis, and forgot their sacred character in their political partisanship. The laity, too, often saw in their bishops and clergy political opponents, not spiritual guides.

Such was the state of things when the volume of False Decretals appears upon the scene. They profess to be a collection of canons of councils, Papal decrees, and letters from the earliest times up to the time of St. Gregory. The writer declares his work to have been undertaken at the suggestion of numbers of bishops and other servants of God, its object being the reformation of ecclesiastical discipline and the enforcing of obedience on clergy and people. The collection consists of three parts:

1. Letters of the Roman Pontiffs from Clement to Melchiades, sixty in number, and a letter of Aurelius, Bishop of

Carthage, to Pope Damasus, with the answer of Damasus. All of these were forged by the author of the Decretals, with the exception of two letters of Pope Clement, to which he has, however, made considerable additions.

2. The Councils from Nicæa to the second Council of Seville (819), nearly all of which are genuine.

3. The Decretals of the Popes from Silvester to Gregory I. (one or two of Gregory II. being added), of which about forty were forged by the compiler, some six or seven are apocryphal documents belonging to former ages, while all the rest are genuine.

The False Decretals were composed between the years 845 and 857. They contain numerous quotations from the Council of Paris in 829, of Aix in 836, and of Meaux in 845. They are first quoted in the Council of Quiercy-sur-Oise in 857, where the synodal letter of the Council cites the spurious letters attributed in the False Decretals to Popes Anacletus, Urban, and Lucius. Hincmar, Bishop of Rheims, quotes them in his work on the divorce of Lothaire (written about 862), and seven or eight years afterwards they again appear in the letters of his nephew, Hincmar of Laon; in each case the forged letters of the Popes being quoted apparently in all good faith as genuine.

All this fixes their date with absolute certainty. They cannot have been earlier than 845; they cannot have been later than 857.

We need not linger long on the question of country which gave them birth. From end to end they proclaim their birthplace to have been Western France. Nay, more, it is as certain as anything can be from internal evidence that the diocese of Rheims was the particular district to which they owe their origin. Their language betrays their connection with France. The nobles are *seniores* (seigneurs) and *comites* (comtes); ambassadors are *missi* (envoyés). In the genuine part of the compilation, the previously existing *Hispana* (or Spanish collection, attributed to St. Isidore of Seville), is supplemented by the *Hadriana* which had been sent some fifty years before to the Frankish Bishops by Hadrian I., and was regarded as of great authority in France, and by another collection now generally known as *Quesnelliana*,

and which was probably compiled in France. The author's own forgeries are mainly from sources exclusively Frankish, *e.g.*, he draws from the Council of Aix in 816 and 836, of Paris in 829, of Meaux in 845, from the letters of St. Boniface of Mayence and of the Abbess Cargith, which could scarcely be known outside France.

That Rheims was their special province appears from the fact that the earliest recognition of them was in that diocese. They are cited (probably) by clerics of Rheims in 853, by the Synod of Quiercy in 857, by Hincmar of Rheims in 859. They are compiled by one who had continually before his mind the condition and circumstances of the Church of Rheims, by one who knew the details of its contemporary history, and who, above all, has ever in view the struggle between its Archbishop Ebbo and his various enemies, and who is determined to vindicate, so far as such a work can vindicate, the action of Ebbo from the beginning to the end of his career.

So far we have been treading on sure ground. Our next step lands us in the region of hypothesis, although we believe that the hypothesis we shall put forward has an amount of probability which approaches to moral certainty. Who was the author of the False Decretals? The question is a very interesting one, and deserves a careful and scientific treatment, and it is with reluctance that we shall have to dismiss it with a mere cursory glance. We have already prepared the way for the expression of our opinion in the history we have given of the events of the time.

Every book bears stamped upon it at least the leading features of its author's character and some indication of his history. The False Decretals show plainly enough that he who compiled them was a bold, clever, industrious, enterprising, unscrupulous man. They show, moreover, that he was a cleric well acquainted with the affairs of the Frankish kingdom generally, and knowing intimately all the details of the Church at Rheims. They also point to his having been a bishop, and a bishop who had suffered from the violence of the secular arm, and had a wholesome dread of the interference of secular princes; a bishop, too, who was keenly conscious of the evils caused by the non-residence of bishops and the usurpation of their functions

in their absence by the suffragans (*chorepiscopi*); a bishop who had had troublesome clerics to deal with; a bishop whose interests lay with the secular clergy and not with the monastic orders, since, in spite of the sufferings of the monks, not a word do his Decretals say about penalties incurred by the violation of monasteries; and last of all, a bishop who had not always resided peacefully at his see, but had wandered at least for a time to other parts of the Empire, and spent some time in the province of Mayence, under Otgar its Archbishop. Who is there in the whole world who fulfils all these conditions, save only the able, unscrupulous, energetic Ebbo, Archbishop of Rheims, the reformer of his diocese in early times, the political partisan in later years, the exile from his diocese at Fulda and elsewhere, who returned only to be again banished, and to die in 851 Bishop of Hildesheim, whither he had been transferred with the Pope's consent by the favour of Louis of Germany.

That the compiler of the Decretals has Ebbo in view throughout his work is not denied even by those who refuse to recognize him as their author. The coincidence of the peculiar circumstances of Ebbo with the peculiar case contemplated by the author of the Decretals cannot have been a chance one. Thus Pope Felix reserves to a bishop who is separated from his diocese and confined elsewhere (*in detentione aliqua a suis ovibus sequestrato*) the revenues accruing during his absence.[1] This was exactly Ebbo's case. If reference were not made to him, why did the Decretals put into the mouth of the Pope a special and not a general case of imprisonment or banishment from a diocese? Pope Alexander declares a confession, even in writing, if made under pressure, to be null and void, in which it is impossible not to see a reference to Ebbo's confession and abdication in 836. The Synod of Antioch, among its genuine decrees, has one which forbids a bishop deposed by a synod to be restored except by a larger synod. This, however, would have been fatal to Ebbo's restitution in 840, to which we alluded above, for he was deposed by forty-three bishops, restored only by twenty. In the Decretals Pope Julius writes to the Bishops of Antioch

[1] Felix I. Ep. 10.

in reference to this synodal decree: "You have said that Athanasius cannot be restored by a number of bishops smaller than the number of those who deposed him. It is not so. This is no rule of the orthodox Bishops of Holy Church, but of the Arians, and has been framed for the destruction of the orthodox Bishops."[1] And finally, the translation to Hildesheim at a time when he claimed to be and really was *de jure* Archbishop of Rheims, which according to the canons was lawful only if the necessities of the Church required it (which was not true in Ebbo's case), is justified in the Decretals by a string of Papal letters allowing of translation whenever a bishop should be removed from his see by motives of necessity or utility, and, above all, if he should be driven thence by violence, where the allusion to Ebbo's appointment to Hildesheim is undeniable.

It was therefore, without any doubt, either Ebbo himself or some one who had his interests very near at heart who was the forger of the Decretals. We can scarcely imagine that any one would be so deeply and intently wrapped up in all that concerned the Archbishop as to frame letter after letter simply to justify the individual action of his friend or patron. Besides, who was there who could have compiled them? Who had resided like Ebbo at Fulda, and afterwards at Hildesheim, both of them at no great distance from Mayence, the records of which were so valuable to the forger? Who else had the same thorough acquaintance with the evils and troubles of the diocese of Rheims as the energetic Archbishop? And, we may add, who had so smarted under the interference of laymen in ecclesiastical affairs? Who else would have ventured on so bold, so original, so thoroughgoing an imposture? We can fancy him in the comparative retirement of his see of Hildesheim, with all the records he had collected before him, putting together, with a mixture of genuine desire to prevent hereafter the evils he had himself known by long and bitter experience, and of a half unconscious desire to justify himself in the eyes of the world, this volume of mingled truth and falsehood. And dishonest as it was, it is certainly a masterpiece; the mere fact that it so long was received unquestioned is the best proof of its author's genius. In-

[1] 174 Julius c. 113.

accuracies there certainly are, and anachronisms; but in general how consistent are its statements, how correct the expositions of canon law put into the mouth of the early Popes. What a knowledge it shows of history, of Councils, of the Church's laws, for one who lived in days when the slow process of transcription limited knowledge and made forgeries difficult of detention!

We say, then, that the authorship of these Decretals is in all probability to be ascribed to Ebbo. We half suspect that he had no intention of their ever being published. They were not completed till after 847, when he had been for some years Bishop of Hildesheim and was an old man drawing near to the grave, and if he ever meant them to see the light, they did not do so till after his death in 851. It is impossible to look into his secret heart—it may be that they were but a *jeu d'esprit*, the occupation of that restless soul during hours of leisure at Hildesheim: meant to amuse his chaplains or his successor, and never intended to deceive the Christian world. It may, on the other hand, have been his desire that they should be published and accepted as genuine. The love of his old diocese and the desire to see a happier and better state of discipline among the clergy, made him forget the sacredness of truth and the folly of attempting to promote the cause of truth by means of falsehood and forgery—the remembrance of his wrongs stirred him to vindicate his actions by giving them the high sanction which he considered that they deserved—and if he attributed to Popes letters they never wrote, and to Councils decrees they never passed, at least he did but make them the mouthpieces of the Church's irrefragable laws and unalterable doctrine. Perhaps he remembered the speeches which Thucydides and Livy put into the mouths of the heroes of Greece and Rome: why should not he too put into the mouths of the heroes of Catholicity words which they ought to have used, and might have used, and perhaps did use, although no record of them may remain?

We are not justifying the unscrupulous forger, we are simply putting forward the thoughts that may have passed through his mind. His long career of ambition had perhaps blinded him to that veneration for the majesty of

truth which a political career too often tends to dim. All through his life he had been pushing, energetic, restless, anxious to take the lead, looking to the end in view rather than to the means. And as we often find, the retired politician became an author, and the characteristics of his political life are reflected in the writings of his old age.

We must leave this interesting topic and omit various details of all kinds which confirm our view of the authorship. Our readers will, if they care to pursue the subject, find in the Decretals themselves, allusions without number, to the evils which had long prevailed in the diocese of Rheims and to the history of Ebbo's episcopate. They will find Ebbo's friends first putting them forward a year or two after his death, but in so cautious a way that it seems to indicate a lurking suspicion of their contents. They will find in the treatment of them by Hincmar, Ebbo's successor in the see of Rheims, an unwillingness to accept what came from so doubtful a source, though he does not seem to have suspected so bold a forgery. All this we must for the present pass by, because the point we have to deal with in particular is the acceptance of these Decretals by the Popes, and their influence in promoting the Papal power. In our description of them, we have purposely omitted to speak of their assertion of Papal claims, because their advocacy of the Supremacy of the Holy See is to their author merely one of the means by which he saw that the prevalent evils were to be cured and a wholesome state of ecclesiastical discipline to be established. It was the means, not the end, and any one who asserts that it was the end, or even one of the ends the author had in view, has, if he has studied the False Decretals at all, studied them with a very imperfect appreciation of their contents.

But we must treat a little more at length this important question of the purpose of the compiler of these Decretals. Some have considered that their object is mainly political, and that they were the work of a partisan of Lothaire, intended to support the cause of that Prince against his father and to justify the Bishops who had ranged themselves on his side. Such a view, though it has an element of truth, can scarcely be seriously maintained. No one would have undertaken so elaborate a work for such an object as

this, or put together a volume in which the greater part would be altogether irrevelant to his purpose. He would not have copied out formerly existing compilations which would not have in any way furthered his design, or filled his pages with ecclesiastical regulations and questions of doctrine and discipline which would have been entirely beside the mark. And apart from this, their date wars against this theory, for they appeared at a time when the struggle between Louis and his ungrateful children was a matter of the past.

Another view regards them as simply a pious fraud, an honest—or rather we should say a dishonest—attempt to restore ecclesiastical discipline in the Church of France, to heal the wounds which political disturbances had inflicted upon her, to give a higher sanction to the canons of local synods which the troubles of the times had rendered almost inoperative, and which had been openly set aside by the secular authorities. Hence we find the False Decretals putting these canons in the mouths of early Popes: adducing Councils and Papal letters without end in support of the liberties and independence of the clergy; enforcing obedience of the clergy to bishops; restricting the functions of suffragans, who had usurped to themselves rights they did not possess; upholding the jurisdiction of metropolitans in the bishops of their district and of primates over metropolitans; and last but not least asserting for all the right of an appeal to the Holy See against secular princes, bishops, archbishops, and synods, provincial or general. Other points on which stress is laid are the intimate union of a bishop with his flock, so that he ought not to be transferred elsewhere, except for some weighty reason, and the right of bishops to be judged by a synod of their own province, and not by a general synod of bishops collected here and there at the will of the King, from which justice could never be looked for, as the King could pack it at his pleasure with those whom he knew would be subservient to his will. How futile all the other measures would have been unless the right of appeal to Rome had been insisted on, is evident from the fact that without it there was practically no hope of redress for an unfortunate bishop who had offended the King or his ecclesiastical superior.

If he could not turn to Rome for aid, how was he to obtain justice? When all else failed and he was driven into exile by an unjust sentence, or by a packed tribunal, or by an interfering prince, one tribunal there was where he knew he would have a fair hearing—one prince who was superior to ambition or political animosity. Slow the process would be: there was no fear of hasty interference on the part of the Pope—it would be months, perhaps years, before sentence would be given; his opponents would be heard; a long correspondence would intervene; his patience would be sorely tried as he remained, still under a cloud, at the Roman Court waiting for the verdict. But he knew it would come at last; justice would be done; and Rome would not shrink from hurling her anathemas, if need be, against offending prince or prelate who refused obedience to her gentler voice. What a security this in those days of violence and wrong! how necessary in those times when there was war to the knife even between bishop and bishop, archbishop and archbishop, not to mention the continual encroachment of kings and seigneurs on the Church's rights!

This view of the purpose of the author of the False Decretals is in the main correct, but we must not leave out of sight the personal element that they contain. The advocate of the Church's privilege has his eye continually on Ebbo's wrongs; each disciplinary measure is guarded by some saving clause against any disparagement of Ebbo's conduct. If bishops are not to be lightly transferred, there is to be an exception if a bishop is driven from his see; if the canons of Antioch forbid the restoration of a bishop deposed by a synod, except by the action of a synod more numerous, the Holy See steps in and cancels the enactment as uncanonical. Hence our general conclusion, combining these two commonly accepted views, is that the False Decretals are intended to bring about a reform of ecclesiastical discipline in Western France, but that they have at the same time pointed allusions, conscious or unconscious, to him whom we cannot but regard as their author, Ebbo of Rheims, to his history, his sufferings, and his wrongs.

It is plain enough, then, that those Decretals were not the work of Rome or Rome's Bishop. It has been said,

however, that even though it may be true that the Popes had nothing to do with the fabrication of them, yet that they were glad enough to use them as soon as they discovered the good service that had been done to their cause.

Some time after this (861), Rothade, Bishop of Soissons, had been excommunicated for alleged disobedience to his metropolitan, Hincmar of Rheims. He thereupon appealed to Rome. The Bishops of the metropolitan province of Rheims held a second synod, deposed Rothade, and appointed another bishop in his place, and handed him over to be imprisoned in a monastery. Rothade appealed to Rome again, and the Pope thereupon sent for Rothade, called a Council (Concilium Romanum V.), and annulled the whole proceeding, threatening Hincmar with excommunication unless Rothade were at once restored. A correspondence took place between the Frankish Bishops and the Pope, in which the former urged that the decrees quoted by Rothade to support his appeal, and which were taken from the False Decretals, were not contained in the *Hadriana*, or collection of decrees sent by Pope Hadrian to Charlemagne, and therefore were not binding. They did not attempt to deny the authenticity of the decrees; but accepting them as authentic, they denied their supreme authority, and they laid down the false principle that whatever was not contained in their *Codex Hadrianus* was not binding on them, and had not the force of law in the Empire of the Franks. To this St. Nicolas answers that they were wrong in despising decrees of the Pontiffs because they were not found in the *Codex Canonum*. "God forbid," he says, "that any Catholic should refuse to embrace with honour due and the highest approval either decretals or any exposition of ecclesiastical discipline, provided always that the Holy Roman Church, keeping them from ancient times, has handed them down to us to be guarded, and lays them up in her archives and ancient memorials. Some of you have maintained that these decretals of former Pontiffs are not contained in the whole body of the canons, while those very men, when they see that they favour their designs, use them without distinction, and now only attack them as less generally received (*minus accepta*) in order to diminish the power of

the Apostolic See and increase their own privileges. For we have some of their writings which are known to adduce not only the decrees of certain Roman Pontiffs, but even of those of early times. Besides, if they say that the decretals of early Popes are not to be received because they are not to be found in the *Codex Canonum* (or Hadriana), this would be a reason for not receiving any ordinance or writing of St. Gregory or of any other Pope before or after him." And St Nicolas then goes on to quote from the genuine letters of St. Leo and Gelasius to prove the respect due to all decretals of the Holy See.[1]

Whether in all this the Pope alludes directly or indirectly to the False Decretals is a question very difficult to decide. It seems that Rothade had quoted them in his favour. The other Bishops had not rejected them as spurious. St. Nicolas abstains from saying a word in their favour, but perhaps alludes to them so far as this, that he twits the Bishops with playing fast and loose—using a document when it suited them, rejecting it as not of supreme authority when it ran counter to their wishes; but he expresses no sort of personal acceptance of the forged collection, and never makes any quotation from it, but only from those genuine letters which were, he says, actually stored up in the Roman archives.

This is clear enough from the difficulty made by the Bishops. Hincmar does not say, Yes, but those documents quoted by Rothade are a forgery, as he would have said if the question turned on their authenticity. Instead of this he says, "We allow that these Decretals are to be received with veneration (*venerabiliter suscipienda*), but we do not allow that they are necessarily to be received *and observed* (*recipienda et custodienda*), thus showing that in his mind the question turned simply on their weight of authority as Papal decrees." In fact, he himself uses these False Decretals over and over again in his quarrel with his nephew, Hincmar of Laon, and to exact submission from the Bishops under him.

St. Nicolas, then, not only acted wisely and prudently in the answer he sent to the Bishops, but he pursued the only course open to him under the circumstances. Rothade

[1] Mansi, xv. 694, 695.

was in the right—right in his interpretation of canon law, right in the justice of his appeal, right in protesting against the way in which he had been treated. In his defence of himself he had adduced decretals heretofore unknown, but which he evidently regarded as undoubtedly genuine. They were unknown to the Pope; their doctrine was correct; they were not in the Roman archives; but the Bishop of Soissons quotes them with no hesitation, and his opponents do not deny their authenticity. What would any Protestant have had the Pope do? Open an endless critical discussion about the value of the documents quoted? Refuse to listen to Rothade, because he illustrated true doctrine from questionable authorities? Instead of this, his reply to the Bishop amounts to this: You object to the authority of what you allow to be Papal Decretals, that they do not occur in your national summary of canon law. There you are wrong. There are plenty of Papal letters outside your codex. You ought to refuse no decretals, supposing always that they are to be found in our archives. But he purposely and pointedly says nothing about these particular decretals, does not quote them, does not approve them, does not recognize them, indirectly sets them aside, inasmuch as he never mentions them, and never from one end of his pontificate to the other makes the slightest use of them, or acknowledges their existence, though they had been quoted in letters addressed to him and copies of them had already been brought to Rome.

But at least we should have imagined that he would afterwards have made some use of these documents about which there seemed to be no doubt in the Catholic world. On the contrary, he writes again to Hincmar in 863, and mentions the Popes who are authorities on the method to be pursued in the trial of bishops, but says not one word of the countless passages in the False Decretals which deal at length with this subject. He mentions the letters of no Pope before St. Siricius, whose letters are genuine, although five years before he had learned from Loup of Ferrières the existence of a decretal attributed to St. Melchiades, most favourable to the rights of the Holy See. But, more remarkable still, he quotes in various letters passages which are attributed by the False Decretals to early Popes, but in

every case he attributes them, not to the Pope whose name they bear in the False Decretals, but to their real authors.

So far for St. Nicolas I. The next Pope was Adrian II. He, it is true, in one passage borrows a passage from a decretal assigned by the forger to Pope Anterus, and gives it under the name of that Pope. The letter in which it occurs is a confirmation of the transfer of a Bishop from the see of Tours to that of Nantes. It is no question of Papal authority being advanced or Papal claims established by those forgeries. It is, perhaps, to be accounted for by the fact of the French Bishops who asked for the authorization of the translation having cited this passage from Anterus in confirmation of their request, the Pope took it for granted that their citation was correct and inserted it in his reply. Or, more probably, he entrusted the drawing up of the letter to some Cardinal or Secretary, who had read and accepted the Decretals, and who introduced the passage as exactly suited to the case in point. No one who has any notion of the mass of business which continually surrounds the Pope can be so unreasonable as to expect him to write each letter with his own hand, or to verify every quotation. When it was read to him for his approval, he would naturally take the extract as correct on the authority of the compiler of the document; nor can any one brand him even with negligence for doing so. But with the exception of this one isolated passage, not a single extract from the False Decretals occurs in the letters or other documents issued by Adrian II. When he quotes from the decretals of former Popes, he invariably assigns the quotations to their true authors, never to those to whom they are attributed in the supposititious volume, although they occur word for word in it, with the authority of greater antiquity put forward in their behalf.

Adrian II. was succeeded by John VIII., of whose voluminous correspondence we have more than three hundred and fifty letters still extant. In all these, not a trace of the False Decretals. Stephen VI., who came next, observes the same silence, save in one passage, where he alludes to a letter falsely attributed to St. Athanasius; but he builds no argument on it, and shows by the context that, even if he were aware of the contents of the Decretals, he

did not regard them as worthy of credit. We need not carry on the matter through the next one hundred and fifty years. It is enough to say, that during all that period there is but one allusion to one of the unauthentic documents quoted in the Decretals. And even here it is probable that the document in question existed before the Decretals were compiled.

All this is the more remarkable, because all this time the Decretals were known at Rome. They are quoted over and over again by authors who wrote at Rome during those two hundred years. John the Deacon, about 880, in a Life of St. Gregory which he dedicates to the then reigning Pontiff; Auxilius, in his defence of the ordinations of Pope Formosus; Luitprand, or the author who bears his name, writing about 950, all use them freely: and we cannot but wonder at the wisdom and prudence of the Holy See in rejecting documents in which there was so much tending to establish Papal authority. In fact, it was not until a French Bishop (St. Leo IX.) occupied the Chair of Peter that the False Decretals began to be regarded as genuine by the Papal Court, and to be quoted as authentic in the documents of the Holy See.

Another important point still remains to be noticed. Gallicans and Protestants have maintained that these Decretals had a very marked influence on the discipline of the Church, that whether Popes used them or not, they were used by Papal partisans to promote Ultramontane encroachments. Not content with this general charge, Gallicans have, happily for truth, alleged certain definite questions on which they say that they have undeniably promoted Papal authority and set aside the traditions of the primitive Church.

Here we may remark, for the benefit of all those who find in these False Decretals a stumbling-block to their acceptance of Rome's supremacy, that nothing can be more at variance with all human experience than to suppose that a document which introduced a new system of government into the Church would have been accepted without a very careful examination of its authority by the faithful at large. Above all, in the Church of France, where there was a

strong national and political spirit, there would have been great reluctance in admitting anything which enabled Rome to diminish the power of the King or the independence of the Gallican Church. And what is the fact with respect to these Decretals? Not only did France receive them unhesitatingly, but she actually gave them birth. Their author was an ecclesiastic intimately acquainted with the affairs of the French Church, eager in her interests, most probably a French Bishop, the friend and favourite of the French King, in his youth the keeper of the Archives of Aquitaine, the reformer of his diocese, in later times the political partisan, whose tendency would have been to oppose Papal "aggression," and to push forward local claims. What more ridiculous than to suppose him inventing a system of government unknown before, and a centralization of authority in Rome to which Christendom was hitherto a stranger? And even supposing that his private interests had made him recklessly Ultramontane, what more ludicrous than to suppose that his inventions would have been received as they were without dispute, and would have been accepted as the law of the Church as soon as promulgated? Nay, more, what more fatal to the Gallican hypothesis respecting them than the fact that those who were slowest to acknowledge them, who displayed an unaccountable reluctance in admitting their authenticity, were those very Popes whose grasping ambition they are supposed to further and promote?

When we come to the definite points in which Gallicans assert power to have accrued from Rome from these Decretals, we find that historical facts do not in any way bear out their assertions. Not one of the three points which they allege is new in the history of the Church; each of them was recognized as the universal law binding on all the faithful before the Decretals were thought of. Thus they say that before the Decretals the necessity of Papal sanction to the validity of provincial synods was never recognized: a statement which is directly contradicted by the history of the Council of Chalcedon, where the charge against Dioscorus was that he had dared to hold a synod without the authority of the Apostolic See. They say again that the right of appeal on the part of

Bishops to the Holy See was introduced by the Decretals. Here too they are equally mistaken. The Council of Sardica, 347, distinctly sanctions such appeal, and when an appeal has been made forbids the appointment of a successor to the see till Rome has heard the case. And lastly, they say that the author of the Decretals first invented the doctrine that the Holy See is subject to no human tribunal. This doctrine, which, by the way, is only implicitly contained in the Decretals, appears in documents anterior to the ninth century, *e.g.* in the so-called Acts of the Second Roman Council, and in the instructions of Pope Gelasius to his Legate Faustus. In fact, there is not a single prerogative or privilege of Rome asserted in the False Decretals which was not generally recognized as the common law of the Christian Church. They changed nothing, altered nothing, added nothing: at most they only put into convenient shape what was before less easy of access, and so helped to popularize a doctrine which was sometimes forgotten by local prelates, and to keep before their minds that dependence on the Holy See which is the central doctrine of Catholic ecclesiastical discipline.

If the ready acceptance of the False Decretals as genuine proves anything at all, it proves that the attitude of dependence on the Roman See which characterizes them throughout, was accepted throughout Western France as the remedy for all the evils that had invaded the Church of France; and that those who lamented the corruptions that had crept in, and the general laxity of discipline that prevailed, knew that their remedy was to be sought in the due maintenance of the authority of the Roman Pontiff. At this distance of time it is impossible to attain to certainty as to the exact motive with which they were written. But of this we may at least be absolutely sure, that they were not written from any desire to increase the power of the Holy See; that they were never employed for this object by the Popes themselves; and they place before our eyes, if not what those to whom they are assigned actually said, yet at least what Christendom in the ninth century believed to have been their opinion respecting the affairs of the Church and the power of her supreme ruler, which had been handed down from the beginning.

St. Cuthbert.*

BY MRS. FRANCIS KERR.

Introductory.

THERE are two main sources from which we draw our knowledge of the life of St. Cuthbert :—

1st. The writings of a contemporary and friend who lived with him both at Melrose and at Lindisfarne, and who is known as "the Monk of Lindisfarne." He wrote by desire of Bishop Eadfrid and the brethren of the latter monastery between 698 and 705. The life is dedicated to the Bishop, who was the immediate successor but one of St. Cuthbert in the see of Lindisfarne.

In his prologue the Monk of Lindisfarne says : "Let me assure (my readers) that they may accept without the smallest hesitation everything I shall record. I beg them so to accept it and to believe I state nothing of which I am not absolutely certain. I have preferred to be silent when I ran any risk of stating what is false."

2ndly. The histories of Ven. Bede, who was fourteen years of age when the Saint died, and who wrote about fifty years after the earliest events he records about him.

*The facts and narratives in the following account of the Saint are taken from the Life by the Monk of Lindisfarne (recently published by Father W. Forbes-Leith, S.J.); from the exhaustive work by his Grace the Archbishop of Glasgow; and from the Rev. J. Stevenson's translation of the life by Bede. All that is mentioned in the Saint's life is to be found in the Monk of Lindisfarne and Ven. Bede.

Bede wrote both a metrical and a prose Life, besides chapters of his Ecclesiastical History which deal with St. Cuthbert. He incorporated a good deal from the Monk of Lindisfarne. In the preface to the prose life he says: "I have not presumed without minute investigation to write any of the deeds of so great a man, nor without the most accurate examination of credible witnesses, to hand over what I had written to be transcribed. When my work was arranged but still kept back from publication, I frequently submitted it, for perusal and for correction, to our reverend brothers Herefrid the priest and others, who for a long time had well known the life and conversation of that man of God. Some faults were, at their suggestion, carefully amended, and thus, every scruple being utterly removed, I have taken care to submit to writing what I clearly ascertained to be the truth, and to bring it into your presence also, my brethren, in order that by the judgement of your authority, what I have written might be corrected if false, or certified to be true. Whilst with God's assistance I was so engaged, my book was read during two days by the elders and teachers of your congregation, and was accurately weighed and examined in all its parts; there was nothing at all found which required to be altered, but everything I had written was, by common consent, pronounced to be worthy to be read without any hesitation, and to be handed over to be copied by such as by zeal for religion should be disposed to do so."

I.

It is not within our purpose to enter into the various discussions as to the birthplace of St. Cuthbert. Suffice it to say that the report of his Irish origin was first mentioned in a MS. of the 14th century, and may have originated in a mistaken transcript of the name Cuthbert for that of Columba, as the rest of the narrative tallies with the account of the birth of that Saint. An inscription in Durham Cathedral and a stained glass window were put up at a comparatively late period, to commemorate the version contained in the said MS., but among early biographies no trace of it exists, while Bede distinctly says in the metrical life that St. Cuthbert was born in Britain.

There can be no reasonable doubt that he was born of Anglian parentage, and in humble circumstances, in Northumbria, probably among the Lammermuirs, but possibly also lower down the country in the region of the Tweed, on the borders of Roxburghshire and Berwickshire, where one or two localities have been suggested. His parents died when he was about eight years of age, and his childhood seems to have been spent in keeping sheep by Leaderside. He was devout from his earliest years, and was in the habit of spending a great part of the night in prayer, while watching his flocks. At the same time, we are told that he excelled in athletic games, and could beat all his playfellows in running, jumping and wrestling. He was as quick in mind as in body. Several incidents of his early years have been preserved to us. On one occasion, he was romping boisterously with other boys, when a child of not more than three years of age tried to stop him—of course to no purpose—at which the little fellow threw himself on the ground and sobbed bitterly. The boys goodnaturedly left off their games and began to comfort him. The child presently turned to Cuthbert and gravely said these solemn words: "Holy Cuthbert, priest and bishop, wherefore do what is so unfit for one like you? It is not right that you, who are appointed by God to teach and lead to virtue others older than yourself, should play among children." Cuthbert could not fully understand the strange words, but he gave up the sports and went away pondering them in his heart. While still a child he had a bad swelling in one knee, and the leg contracted so that he could not walk. He used to be carried out every day and laid down near a wall in the sunshine. One day he saw riding towards him a man clad in white and very beautiful, who asked him for hospitality. The child replied that by God's permission he was disabled for the time, otherwise he would willingly have ministered to him. The stranger questioned him kindly, and on hearing what was the matter, bid him boil wheat-flour with milk and while warm bathe his knee with it. After some days of the treatment, Cuthbert was cured, and from that time always believed he had been helped by his guardian angel.

A touching incident of his youth must also be mentioned. He had been sent on some business in winter a long distance beyond the River Wear. The country was desolate, and heavy rains overtook him, while the only shelter he could find was a deserted shed used by shepherds in summer when pasturing their flocks among the hills. Hungry and weary, he looked round to see if any stray provisions had been left by them, but finding none, he settled down to pray and to await the clearing of the weather. His horse which was tied inside the hut meanwhile began to nibble at the low-thatched roof, and presently pulled down some hay out of which fell fresh bread and meat, wrapped in a cloth. We are told that he finished his devotions before he partook of these unexpected rations, after which, joyfully thanking God, he continued his journey. His biographers tell us that they omit many wonderful incidents of his early life, to pass the more quickly to his maturer years.

In 651 died St. Aidan, the great apostle of Northern Northumbria or Bernicia, founder of the famous monastery of Lindisfarne, and also of Mailros on the Tweed. Cuthbert had grown up under the shadow of Mailros, so to speak, and must have been familiar with the monks. Their life, it may have been, that first prompted him to night-watches and prayer, while St. Aidan's death was, as we shall see, the turning point in his career. One night, while he kept the flocks with other shepherds on the hills by Tweed and Leader, he was watching in prayer as usual, when lo! a stream of light broke through the darkness, and he beheld angels descending from heaven and presently mounting upwards again, bearing with them a globe of fire, which Cuthbert understood to be the soul of the holy bishop Aidan at that moment passing to glory. He roused his companions and told them of the vision, and they praised God together; but he himself determined to hand over the flocks to their owners, and to give himself to God in a monastery.

Eata was then Abbot of Mailros. The community brought there by St. Aidan were probably a colony from Iona. Thither Cuthbert wended his way, attracted doubtless by early association, but chiefly by the reputation for holiness of St. Boisil the Prior, whose

name survives in that of the village of St. Boswell. We are told that on the way he was fed by ravens as Elijah of old. He leapt from his horse at the monastery gate and gave it up together with his spear. Boisil, who had watched him coming, turned to one of the brethren near, and exclaimed: "Behold a servant of the Lord!" "O my brethren," writes the monk of Lindisfarne of this period of Cuthbert's life, "I presume not to think myself worthy to have enjoyed his conversation. No words could ever express what that was. An angel in look, graceful in language, holy in what he did, pure in body, brilliant in genius, great in counsel, Catholic in faith, most patient in hope, and boundless in charity." He kept the rule with the greatest fervour, and was foremost in reading, working, watching and prayer. Though his frame was robust, and the amount of work he undertook very great, his endurance in fasting and watchings was amazing. Moreover, he abstained entirely from any strong drink. St. Boisil loved him beyond all the brethren, on account of his marvellous innocence of life. Cuthbert studied the Scriptures under his guidance, and advanced in wisdom and grace before God and man.

II.

The Mailros of St. Cuthbert was about two miles further down the Tweed than the famous Abbey built by St. David nearly five hundred years later, the ruins of which are now known as Melrose Abbey.

Old Melrose was built on a tongue of land almost encircled by the Tweed. On the other side, a bare red cliff, which extends some way, rises straight from the river; the banks, steep on both sides, are, except when broken by the cliff, luxuriously and beautifully wooded, and, on the further side, are over-topped by rounded hills of grass and heather which rise to a great height. These are the traditional hills of Cuthbert's childhood. From them we may behold glorious stretches of undulating border moorlands, bounded by the Cheviots, which, though only twenty miles off, owing to the effects of cloud and mist, often have the appearance of great and distant mountains. Glorious are the lights and

shadows as they roll over the moorlands, producing infinite variety and effect of colour. Was it so in St. Cuthbert's time? or was the country too thickly wooded to allow their magic effects free play? Immediately in front the Eildons rise like sentinels, silent witnesses of the deeds of the Border Saints as of those of the many other human beings, whether monks or moss-troopers, nobles or peasants, invaders or invaded, who fought, worked, prayed and suffered in the country around during so many centuries. Deep below us, winding and threading through the wooded gorge, here rippling and shimmering, there dark with salmonpool, the river flows, and after doubling round Old Melrose, winds on towards the undulating country, where its course can be followed only by the masses of wood on either side.

After some years at Melrose, Cuthbert accompanied Eata to make a new foundation at Ripon. Here he was appointed to look after the guests, and it is said that he once entertained an angel under the guise of a pilgrim. Freshly fallen snow was on the ground: he had washed the feet of the weary stranger according to custom, and had then gone to the bakery for bread, as the usual provision was done. The new loaves were still in the oven, and he returned forthwith, but the guest had disappeared. No footmarks pressed the snow: while in an inner room lay wondrously fragrant loaves, which filled the place with their perfume.

Before long, Eata and his companions had returned to Melrose—dismissed in fact—while the monastery was handed over to another community. This was owing to the differences which existed as to the right time of keeping Easter. King Alchfrid (son of Oswy), who had given the land at Ripon, had been instructed in the faith by St. Wilfrid, and kept the feast at the time definitely fixed not long before this period by the Pope; while the monks of Melrose and Ripon still followed the custom established at Iona by St. Columba. This had been handed down from the missionaries who converted Ireland, and doubtless had been in very general use, as well as authorized by the Popes, at the time they brought the faith to that country. It naturally

took time for the more distant off-shoots and outlying portions of the Church, in those days of difficult travelling and communication, to realize that Rome had found reason to alter the observance on which so much of practical life both ecclesiastical and other depended. The Northumbrians had been brought round to the custom of Rome and of the Universal Church chiefly through St. Wilfrid at the Council of Whitby in 664. Later on, we find Eata and his companions also ranking with its adherents, but it was not till 715 that the Scots and Picts, as nations, gave up their erroneous computation.

In 664 a terrible pestilence broke out which almost depopulated the land. Both Boisil and Cuthbert were seized with it; the latter recovered almost immediately, owing, as he considered, to the prayers of the brethren. It was otherwise with St. Boisil, who, sending for his disciple, foretold to him all that should befall him, and how he would become a bishop; adding that for himself he knew he would die in seven days, and therefore he begged him to meditate with him on the Gospel of St. John, of which the seven quarto pages of his copy would each occupy one day. After seven days of calm and holy study, Boisil fell asleep in the Lord, and Cuthbert, was made Prior. He remained for the next ten years at Melrose, living the life of a saint both within the monastery, and among the people. Then as now men did not always live up to their profession of faith. During the pestilence some of the population had disgraced themselves by recourse to charms and other remnants of idolatry. From these practices Cuthbert reclaimed them. He never spared himself to win their souls, but toiled among them, generally on foot, though sometimes on horseback, being often away from the monastery a month at a time on his apostolic expeditions. On these occasions, how often he must have crossed the Lammermuirs and the braes of Yarrow and Ettrick, of Gala and of Teviot! Along their banks, and all through Northumbria he preached and worked his miracles—at least as far north, in all probability, as the Forth.

When he reached a village, the people, as was customary in those days, gathered round him, to hear the

Word of God. So angelic was his countenance on these occasions, that he took men's hearts by storm; they openly poured out alike their sins and their most secret thoughts, from the conviction that nothing would escape his sanctified vision, owing to the great light he received from God.

It may be well here to say a few words of explanation in connection with some of the miraculous occurrences and wonders recorded in his life.

A miracle may be defined as an extraordinary effect produced in the natural creation, either contrary to the known laws of nature or beside the usual course of nature, and above the abilities of natural agents, performed either by God Himself or by His holy Angels, or by some other instrument of God's choice. The power of miracles is often bestowed by God upon His Saints, for the manifestation of Divine Power, either as a witness to Divine Truth, or as a seal to the character and mission of a representative or messenger of God; or again in answer to the humble prayer of faith for the good of men: there are plentiful examples in the Old and New Testaments and throughout the history of the Church. St. Cuthbert appears to have possessed the gift in a high degree; his life also abounds with narratives of graces and kindnesses (so to speak) bestowed by Providence in answer to his requests. God no doubt provides in a special way for the needs of those who specially give up their lives to His work; and that He does this even in minute particulars, the lives of every one of the Saints, and of holy people innumerable, bear witness. As to some of the wonders related of his perfect control over the animals and their docility, it must be remembered that this power was originally bestowed upon man as a preternatural gift in his state of innocence; and we find from time to time God bestowing it anew on some of His servants for His own good purposes. With all allowance for legend, the hermits of the desert in the early days of the Church, St. Francis of Assisi and St. Antony of Padua in the middle ages, and St. Francis Xavier and others later on, furnish well-known examples of this form of miraculous power. It seems to come home to us as fitting that the marvellously pure of heart, not being

under the dominion of sin, should be given some of the privileges intended for man had he remained faithful. These remarks may help to reduce difficulties with regard to some of the occurrences mentioned by the biographers of St. Cuthbert which, at first sight, may seem fantastic and legendary, and which assuredly are not binding on our faith, though by no means impossible.

A case in point occurred during a visit to the Monastery of Coldingham in Berwickshire, of which Ebba, daughter of Ethelrid, King of Northumbria, was Abbess. She governed her house of nuns and also the adjoining monastery. This arrangement was not unfrequent in Anglo-Saxon times, in cases where the Abbess of the Convent had originally founded both institutions, more especially when she possessed good governing capabilities. Ebba had earnestly begged Cuthbert to come to Coldingham as she much needed his advice. During his stay at the monastery, he spent his usual night-watches of prayer on the seashore. A monk who out of curiosity, watched him one night, saw him go into the sea up to the loins and remain there some time with the waves rushing over his shoulders. Afterwards he knelt in prayer on the beach, where a wonderful thing occurred. Two small animals(called "sea otters" by the biographers) came up from the water and lay down at his feet, and licked them and rubbed them as if to warm them. After a little, Cuthbert blessed them and they left him. The intruding monk, who suffered severely from the inclemency of the night, did not venture to make his adventure known till the next day, when he confessed it to the Saint, who gave him to understand he was already aware of it, and made him promise never to reveal during his life what he had seen. This promise the monk kept, but after Cuthbert's death he solemnly deposed to it.

Somewhere about this time, during a missionary expedition, he and a boy, his only companion, were walking along the banks of the river Teviot (as it is supposed), when he asked the boy where he thought they would get that day's food. The boy answered that indeed he knew not. "Trust in Him who said, Seek first the Kingdom of Heaven and all else shall be

added to you." said the Saint; and pointing to a large bird flying overhead, continued: "Yonder bird, by the mercy of God, will provide for us;" and truly the bird alighted near the river, and presently they found him with a large fish of which they took a half, and left the rest, as Cuthbert said, "for the fisherman." Their own part they carried to the nearest dwelling, where they cooked and ate it, and had enough besides for some of the people of the place. In a certain village (thought to have been Wrangholm) he occasionally visited a good woman who had brought him up after the death of his parents, and who he used to say had been a mother to him. On one occasion a fire broke out, and her house was in danger of destruction owing to the strong wind, which blew the flames towards it. He bade her not fear, and cast himself on the ground at her door in silent prayer, when immediately the wind changed and blew in a direction in which it was harmless. The following quaint and vividly described incident is full of instruction. Once when preaching inside some building to a number of people, he was interiorly enlightened to know that Satan, at work among them, would make a great effort to thwart the work of God in their souls. He thereupon begged them on no account, whatever might happen, to allow themselves to be interrupted, as the evil one wished to delude them. Presently a cry of fire arose and, forgetful of his warning, all except two or three whom he kept back with his hand, rushed out to see, but on reaching the house where they thought they had seen the flames and smoke, though they even began to pull down the walls, no traces of fire could be found on which, with shame and sorrow, they returned to the Saint and begged his forgiveness. The Monk of Lindisfarne, who records most of these stories, mentions that some of the people concerned were still living when he wrote.

After twelve years at Melrose, Cuthbert was moved to Lindisfarne,* which monastery was built on the rock afterwards called Holy Island, an island only at high tide

* So much has been written about Lindisfarne, and it has been so often described, that we will not here enter into any details about that celebrated monastery.

when there is a depth of from seven to nine feet of water between it and the mainland. He there continued to be the apostle of the people of Northumbria while his miracles became more conspicuous; like our Lord and His disciples, he cured the sick and the suffering and cast out devils. He was the first to draw up a religious rule for the brethren of Lindisfarne, which ever after was observed by them along with that of St. Benedict, which in after times they embraced. Though in this he at first met with opposition, his patience and resolute, yet judicious conduct soon won round those who objected.

We are told the outward calm of his presence betokened the internal consolations of the Holy Ghost amid his vexations. At this time he would spend three or four successive nights in prayer. His devotion in saying Mass was so great he could not keep back abundant tears, while the fervour of his zeal in correcting sinners was so tempered with gentleness that he wept over those who confessed to him. We are told that his clothing was most ordinary, neither slovenly nor yet over-neat.

As Prior of Lindisfarne, Cuthbert spent twelve more years of his monastic life, and then unable any longer to repress the aspirations of his soul towards a solitary life for the purpose of converse with God alone, after a short sojourn on a rock close to Holy Island, he was allowed to retire to complete solitude in the lonely islet of Farne, about six miles distant from Lindisfarne, though only two from the mainland. Farne was reported to be infected with evil spirits, and no one had ever lived there, though several had made the attempt. It is one of a group of twenty-three islets—a mere rock some eleven acres in extent at low-tide. The southern end rises precipitously from the sea to a height of eighty feet; the northern, though sloping, is exposed to the full fury of the open sea. On the east is a small natural haven. At that time about five acres was fit to cultivate, but there was neither fresh water nor trees. He began forthwith to build a round cell, some four or five poles across. We are told the wall was truly extraordinary—a cubit in height, and built of stones so large that no one who was unaware of the great strength with which he was endowed could have believed them to be

movable. It is said he was helped by angels. Inside he formed a chamber, partly dug out of the solid rock and divided it into two compartments from whence he could behold nothing but the sky overhead. As the spot was likely to prove uninhabitable for want of water, he sent for the brethren, and begged them to join him in praying to God, who gave water from the rock to Moses, and likewise to help him in the search for some. They both prayed and dug deeply in the middle of the stony ground of the cell. Soon a spring gushed forth. The water from that time never either overflowed or failed, and was excellently sweet.

He vainly tried to grow wheat in the land, but was more successful with barley; he said he would sooner return to the monastery than tax the brethren with his maintenance. At first he was worried by the birds that picked his crops, but after a gentle expostulation and command not to injure what did not belong to them, they gave up doing so. Two amusing and disobedient old ravens, however, who used to strip the thatch from the roof of a house of shelter near the haven were gravely ordered off the island. They departed accordingly, but afterwards were allowed to return, when they gave token of penitence and entirely mended their ways! A touching token of the tender care of Divine Providence took place while he was labouring to build a hut beside a deep cleft in the rocks near the sea. He needed a beam of twelve feet in length for part of the foundation, to span the cleft, and begged the monks to bring him one. They readily promised, but it passed out of their minds and they returned without. He would not let them give way to much distress however, but sweetly told them he thought God would provide for his needs. The next morning it was found that the tide had washed ashore a beam of the length required, on the spot where he meant to built.

At first the brethren often visited him, when he washed their feet and ministered to them, but he gradually withdrew even from their society. The fame of his extraordinary virtues spread rapidly, however, and numbers came even from the remotest parts of Britain to confess their sins and ask advice in their temptations. None left

him unstrengthened or unconsoled. Lest the brethren should have too exalted an idea of him, he used to speak to them of his trials and temptations, and tell them that community life, when the monks were subject to the will of their Abbot, who regulated their time and everything else, was harder and more admirable than his solitude. So great, however, was his holiness and the miraculous power vouchsafed to him by God that, like the apostles of old, the very things he wore or touched, wrought cures on the sick.

We may instance the cure of the Abbess Elflid of Whitby, a daughter, grand-daughter and sister of kings, who suffered from a grievous illness which baffled the skill of all the physicians, and after a long continuance of the same was reduced to the point of death, and yet not dying, remained in a most helpless condition in which she could not raise herself or stand at all nor move except on all fours like an animal. She began to fear her piteous condition was permanent. In her grief she was inspired with the thought that could she but obtain something that belonged to the reverend man of God, she might, with trust in God, be cured. Soon after, some one arrived with a gift of a linen girdle sent to her by Cuthbert, to whom she understood her wish had been made known by heaven. She girded herself with it; the next day she was able to stand erect, and the third day was restored to perfect health. One of her nuns likewise was cured from intolerable pains in her head by the touch of the same girdle.

The time was now drawing near when Boisil's last prophecy was to be fulfilled. Shortly before the event, this same Abbess, Elflid of Whitby, after much entreaty, obtained an interview with the Saint at a monastery on a small island close to the mainland. She had long wished for his advice, and they communed long and earnestly before they parted. While he was yet speaking, she suddenly threw herself at his feet, and adjured him, with many tears by the terrible Name of the heavenly King and of His holy Angels and Saints, to tell her how long her brother King Egfrid would live and rule. He, trembling at her adjuration, tried to put her off, and asked how she could use the word "long"

at all with regard to this miserable life, but finally answered: "O handmaid of God, surely twelve months of life is no small privilege," whereat understanding how soon he would die, she wept bitterly. Taking courage, however, she again adjured him by the majesty of the sovereignty of God to tell her who would succeed. He answered her questions, and spoke of his own near call to the episcopate, which he said he fain would have prevented but knew must be; and finally foretold his death in two years from that time, all of which things took place as he said. Soon after, Cuthbert was appointed to the See of Lindisfarne, in the room of Eata, who was made bishop of Hexham. The circumstances that caused his election are to be found in the history of those times. Suffice it here to say it was decreed at an important synod held at Twyford, and presided over by Archbishop Theodore, in the presence of King Egfrid.

Letters and messages had no effect in overcoming Cuthbert's reluctance to accept the dignity. The King and the holy Bishop Trumwin, with several monks and great men, therefore went to seek him in person, and kneeling round him, with tears besought him to return with them to the synod. The King even reminded him of what St. Boisil had foretold, nor did they desist till he gave way and, his eyes filled with tears, consented to appear before the synod. The consecration was delayed, however, for some months, and eventually took place in Eastertide, March 26th, at York, in the presence of King Egfrid and of seven other Bishops, at the head of whom was the Primate Archbishop Theodore. It was probably during this interval that he and Bishop Eata met once more at their much beloved Mailros. On the way hence he cured the servant of one of the King's attendants with water which he had blessed.

The following May St. Cuthbert's prediction with regard to King Egfrid was fulfilled—he was killed in battle with the Picts, probably in Galloway, in the fortieth year of his age, and was succeeded by his half-brother Aldfrid. Egfrid had been warned by St. Cuthbert not to undertake the expedition, but when the time for the fulfilment of the prophecy drew near, the Saint went to Lugubalia or Luel (Carlisle) where the Queen was awaiting the issue

of the campaign in her sister's monastery, probably that he might be at hand to give her comfort and help in the coming tribulation. The next day some of the leading inhabitants were showing him the many Roman remains in the city, especially a fountain of great beauty, when he suddenly became troubled and bent himself to the ground; then lifting up his eyes to heaven he groaned and said, "Perhaps even now the issue of the battle is over." He then made known to them that a great misfortune had befallen them; and going to the Queen advised her to start without delay for the royal city (probably Bamborough) lest the King should be slain; and even so it was ascertained to have happened, at the day and hour when he was standing by the Roman fountain. Not long after, he returned to Carlisle for the purpose of ordinations, and to bless the entrance into religious life of the widowed Queen.

There the venerable hermit Herbert, who dwelt on an island in Derwentwater, and with whom he had long been united in the closest ties of spiritual friendship, came to meet him. In each other's presence, and in the hearing of many other people, Cuthbert foretold the time of his death, whereon Herbert besought him so earnestly if he were going to the heavenly home not to leave him, his friend and disciple, behind that Cuthbert, after praying for a few moments, said to him: "Rejoice and do not weep, brother, for God has granted what you so much wish." The event proved it, for both died the same day and hour, though Herbert had a long sickness which prepared him for his end.

To this same year, 686, belong several great miracles of the Saint. During the episcopal visitation, while preaching and confirming among the villages, he came to the dwelling of a certain Earl whose wife lay dying. On seeing the Saint arrive, the Earl knelt down in his joy to thank God for a visit so opportune, and then after offering the usual rites of hospitality, told him of his wife's hopeless state, and begged with great simplicity that he would bless some water with which she might be sprinkled, and thus either be restored to health or helped in her passage to eternity. The Bishop complied, and desired a priest to sprinkle her

with the blessed water. The sick woman was immediately restored to complete health of mind and body. She rose, thanked God, and attended to her guests according to the usage of the times. A nun, kinswoman of Ethelwald, Abbot of Mailros (later Bishop of Lindisfarne), who suffered from intolerable pains in the head and side, and who was despaired of by the physicians, was cured after being anointed by Cuthbert with consecrated oil. Hildmer the prefect, whose wife in former days had been delivered from madness or "possession" by the Saint, was now himself miraculously cured by drinking water in which a morsel of loaf blessed by the Saint had been broken, on which the internal pain and wasting away of the limbs ceased entirely.

Somewhere about this time he visited the Abbess Verca at her monastery near the mouth of the Tyne (probably the Tyne in Northumberland as it is called a large river) and there he renewed our Lord's first miracle by giving to water the flavour of wine. During that same visit, while sitting at the table he was enlightened from above to know the sudden death of one of the brethren of the adjoining monastery whose soul he saw going to glory. It was found on investigation that one of them, a shepherd in an outlying farm had been killed at the time by falling from a tree, and the news was brought in just in time for his name to be included in the memento for the dead at the Saint's Mass that morning.

The unflagging zeal of the holy Bishop led him to visit every corner of his great diocese. In one wild place among the hills, where many people from different outlying villages had gathered together for confirmation, there was neither church nor dwelling. Rude huts of branches were hastily put up by some of the people as shelter for him and for themselves. For two days he preached to crowds and, as we are told, "imparted the grace of the Holy Ghost by the imposition of hands to those who had been recently baptized." Before they all scattered again, some poor women arrived carrying on a litter a young man in the last degree of emaciation from disease. They had brought him to receive the

Bishop's blessing. Cuthbert, touched with compassion, bade the crowd withdraw, and pouring himself out in prayer presently blessed him, "who arose and went his way" in sound health, after eating, while he and the crowds of people exulted in thanksgiving. In another village where the plague was raging, he visited and comforted all who were stricken by it, eagerly asking his chaplain if there were not yet more who needed him or whether they should pass on elsewhere The chaplain presently found a woman who had already lost one son and who held another who was dying in her arms. Cuthbert kissed and blessed the child and promised the poor mother that not only should he recover but that she should lose no other of her family from the plague.

Amidst all his comings and goings and the turmoil with which he was surrounded as bishop, his charities were boundless; he unceasingly fed the hungry and clothed the naked; while towards himself he continued the austerities of monastic life. In good sooth his whole soul yearned for God, nor was his ardent spirit to be kept long parted from his Maker. Within two years of his becoming bishop, Cuthbert, knowing the end was approaching, resigned his See, and after spending the feast of Christmas in his episcopal Church, with the brethren, betook himself once more to Farne. A crowd of monks stood by as he stepped into the boat; a very aged one, himself suffering from a wasting illness, asked him when he should return. "When you bring my body here," was the reply.

Before long some of the brethren went to see him; he exhorted them and blessed them, and bade them refresh themselves with what he had prepared in the guest house and then returned to his cell. The brethren however preferred to eat what they had brought with them. Meanwhile a storm arose which raged for seven days and prevented their leaving. At the end of that time the Saint came again and reproved them for not having obeyed him, and ordered them forthwith to seek his refreshments and partake of them. By the time they had done this, the storm had subsided, and a favourable breeze and sufficiently calm sea enabled them to return to Lindisfarne.

The circumstances of his last illness were minutely recorded by the Abbot Herefrid who was with him at the last, and from whom Bede received them. Herefrid and several monks had been for three days on the island, and visited him before leaving. Cuthbert owned that a new sickness had come over him, but would not allow any of them to stay, and they, not understanding the gravity of the case, after some remonstrance went their way, not however without receiving directions from him as to his burial.

He said he wished to be wrapped in the winding sheet provided by the Abbess Verca, and to be laid near his Oratory to the east of the cross he had put up. Much alarmed by these instructions they renewed their entreaties without avail. On arriving at Lindisfarne, they assembled the brethren in the Church to pray for him. A storm prevented their getting across to Farne for five days, and when they were able to do so, they found him very weak, not in his cell, but in the guest house. With a little warm water they washed an ulcerated sore in his foot, from which a quantity of blood came away, and seeing him so utterly worn with pain and abstinence, they warmed some wine, and persuaded him to take a little, while Herefrid tenderly reproached him for not having allowed them to stay before. He answered: "God willed that, thus deprived of society and the help of man, I should suffer some affliction. When you were gone, my illness increased and I came hither to meet whoever of you might return, in order that you need not enter my cell." He had been there five days and nights without moving, with only five onions by way of food, and of these he had only eaten half one. He told them that his enemies (evil spirits) had never so persecuted him as during those five days. Herefrid tells us he dared not ask him what the temptations had been. Two of his brethren stayed with him, one of whom had always been accustomed to see him.

Meanwhile, Herefrid and the monks determined to spare no efforts to induce him to allow his body to be buried at Lindisfarne. He agreed, but said he himself thought the place where he had mainly fought his humble fight for the Lord was the most suitable for his

body to rest, in that also he had feared they would be troubled by the number of criminals and others who would fly to take sanctuary near it. He advised them therefore to bury it within the church, as there they could at least control those who came, and visit it themselves. They carried him back to his cell. None but himself had ever entered it, but they besought him now to allow one of them to do so. He chose the aged one, already mentioned as having a severe complaint. Of this however he himself told the brethren he was cured as soon as he began to uphold the weak steps of the bishop and to support his weight. The dying Saint then sent for Herefrid, who gave him the last sacraments and received his last recommendations. "Have peace," he said, "and divine charity ever amongst you. Let there be mutual concord between you and all other servants of Christ, but have no communion with those who err from the unity of the Catholic Faith either by keeping Easter at an improper time, or by their wicked lives; and know and remember that, sooner than consent in any way to the wickedness of schismatics, thus placing a yoke on your neck, I would rather you leave this place to reside wherever God may direct you." This advice was followed to the letter in after ages. At midnight he lifted up his eyes to heaven, held out his hands, and his soul departed to the joys of heaven on March 20th, 687.

The monks at once carried his body to Lindisfarne, where it was prepared with aromatic spices for burial, according to the custom of the day. They swathed it in the linen cerecloth (which adhered tightly to the skin) and wrapped the head in a white napkin; the episcopal vestments, in which he was wont to offer the Holy Sacrifice, were put on. Unconsecrated sacramental elements were placed on his breast with the chalice and paten, the tokens of his priesthood. Another cerecloth enclosed the whole, and he was laid in a stone coffin. This was placed on the righthand side of the altar in the Church of his See, St. Peter's at Lindisfarne. From this time continuous miracles were wrought by his intercession and by the touch of his relics. The first of these was the cure of a possessed boy, on whom the usual exorcisms of the Church had had no effect.

III.

According to pious Anglo-Saxon custom with regard to those who had been eminently holy, the monks obtained leave from Bishop Eadbert, eleven years after the death, to take up the remains, which they then enclosed in a wooden shrine. Venerable Bede and the Monk of Lindisfarne both give vivid descriptions of the opening of the stone coffin, of the reverent fear and joy of the monks when they found the body entire, the colour preserved, and his joints flexible; the white linen cloths next the skin had kept their original whiteness, his garments and the shoes (the latter were new when he was buried) were undecayed and fresh. By the Bishop's directions, a part of the outer dress was removed and a new one put over the other priestly robes; a new cere-cloth was added before the body was placed in the wooden coffin. Bede, who was about twenty-four years of age at this time, records the examination minutely. Several miracles took place: one of the brethren was cured from palsy; a paralytic young man recovered the use of his limbs; a priest from the diocese of St. Willibrord, Bishop of the Frisians, who was dangerously ill, obtained a cure; while a young man who had a bad swelling in the eye-lid, which threatened to deprive him of sight, was also cured by the touch of the relics. Bede testifies that "to this day miracles are wrought, if the faith of those who seek them admit of it. Even the clothes which cover him possess a healing power." The devotion at the shrine then grew more and more, and attracted numbers of pilgrims.

At the close of the eighth century came evil days. The Danes landed and perpetrated every kind of horror throughout Northumbria. Lindisfarne and its church were pillaged, the monks were slaughtered, and boys whom they had trained were carried off as slaves. A few brethren escaped, and these on their return found the body of the Saint untouched. The church and commmunity were before long restored and soon flourished again, but eighty-two years later another savage invasion took place. This time the monks determined to be before-hand, and to leave the island.

by the advice of their bishop Eardulph, who reminded them of the Saint's last words. They hastily removed the shrine; various other precious relics were put along with the body in the coffin; seven bearers were chosen from among the bishop's clerks; and with their precious burden they crossed over to the mainland, accompanied by their people with their flocks and herds. We are told that it was high tide, in fact a spring tide, when they came to the shores and lo! while they were waiting for the ebb, the waters divided of their own accord to the right and left, and formed a passage for them, after which they closed as before. Their flight was none too soon: the church was once more pillaged, and vengeance sworn by the Danes against the monks should they ever return.

IV.

For seven whole years the body was carried from place to place, from the hills of Kyloe to the Cheviots, through all the country that is now Yorkshire, Lancashire, Durham, Westmoreland, Northumberland, Cumberland and Roxburgh, even into Galloway. The land was afterwards studded with churches and chapels built on the spots where the coffin had rested. To the people who had accompained the monks from Lindisfarne, were gradually added the Christian natives of the districts through which they passed, so that the numbers who followed rose to a great multitude. The bearers who carried the coffin on their shoulders were periodically renewed from among the laymen.* How they escaped the fury of the Danes is marvellous.

As time went on, however, many of the people lost heart and withdrew; but Bishop Eardulph and the Abbot of Carlisle both remained with the wanderers. About the seventh year a great famine, the result of the ravages of the Danes, drove them to embark from the mouth of the Derwent, and endeavour to seek refuge in Ireland; they were turned back however by terrific gales and nearly shipwrecked. On this occasion they lost a

* To a late date there were still families in the north of England who boasted of their descent from the bearers of the body of St. Cuthbert.

copy of the Gospels set with precious stones, which they had always carried about, and which they recovered in a wonderful way on the shore at Whitherne, the spot where, centuries before, St. Ninian had built the first Christian church in Scotland. During the last months of their wanderings the need of some kind of vehicle to carry the coffin became pressing, and a light cart and horse were supplied in the wild country through which they passed in a touching and providential manner. The times now became more secure, and after a few months' sojourn at Crake, north of York, which had been given by King Egfrid to the Saint on the day of his episcopal consecration, Bishop Eardulph fixed his residence at Chester-le-Street. King Alfred's victories over the Danes having secured peace, he and the Danish King Guthred jointly bestowed the land between the Tyne and Wear as a perpetual possession to St. Cuthbert and those who should serve his Church. The Saxon Kings vied with each other in honouring the shrine, which was undisturbed for one hundred and thirteen years. After that time, again on account of the Danes, the body was once more carried forth over hill and dale for about four months, when it was made known to the travellers that Dunholme or Durham was to be the permanent resting-place of the Saint.

The whole story is full of interest. The spot where later rose the great Cathedral was then uninhabited and thickly wooded. A chapel of boughs was first built through the piety and energy of the neighbouring people, and soon with the help of the powerful Earl of Northumberland, the land was cleared and a temporary church was put up. A stone one, built by Bishop Aldhune, was solemnly dedicated in 999. In 1069, the monks fled with the body from the wrath of William the Conqueror for three months to Lindisfarne, after which they returned in safety, and in 1094, the homely church built by Aldhune was pulled down and the first stones of the present glorious pile were laid by Bishop Carileph, by Malcolm Canmore, King of Scotland, and by Turgot Prior of Durham (afterwards confessor to Malcolm's Queen, St. Margaret). The Cathedral was not completed till 1242, but the body, which had been laid

in a temporary though splendid shrine during the process of building, was transferred with great magnificence within the precincts as early as 1104, and on that occasion several solemn examinations before Bishops, monks, and laity took place, when the marvel was once again attested.

The monks and prior had prepared for the opening of the coffin by fasting and prayer; a preliminary examination took place at night. After undoing the outer coffin, which had been added five centuries before and the ancient wooden one within, they beheld the copy of the Gospels which had been put on the body. They hardly dared to proceed, so great was their awe. With tears of joy they moved the linen cloth, when a wondrous sweet odour was exhaled and lo! on his right side, and as if he slept, whole and entire lay the great patriarch Saint of Northumbria. His episcopal robes of rich silken tissue and rare colours were also perfectly preserved. The monks prostrated themselves on the ground and recited the penitential psalms. The body was flexible, solid and fresh coloured, and when they carried it, bent in the middle from its own weight. The wonder was confirmed in the presence of all the next day in further public examination by the Bishop.

As the ages went on, fresh architectural glories were added to the great Cathedral, till the evil days of Henry VIII.; when at the suppression of the monasteries, Durham shared the fate of the rest. The Cathedral was despoiled of its treasures and property. Henry's commissioners broke open the shrine, stole the jewels and costly property, and laid violent hands on the body of which they broke the limbs. They bore witness, however, that "he was lying whole," and not only whole and incorrupt, but "his vestments he had on wherein he said Mass were fresh and safe and not consumed." These words are taken from their written depositions. The body was buried in a vault, under the place where the shrine had been, the king's pleasure having been taken on the subject.

A constant tradition has it that during the temporary restoration of religion under Mary, the monks took away and hid the body. It is said that the secret

of its resting place was handed down among certain members of the Benedictine Order in England, otherwise that resting-place remains unknown. Much has been said about the informal opening of the aforesaid vault in 1827, by a couple of the Protestant prebendaries of the Cathedral, accompanied by one or two other gentlemen and some workmen. It was then found that an opening had previously been made in the further end of the vault, which opening had been refilled by loose stones. Coffins, a skeleton and other bones (such as a skull and bones of children), differing in essential ways from anything handed down by tradition about St. Cuthbert were found in it. It would be impossible to go into the question here, and we must content ourselves with referring our readers to the exhaustive analysis of the proceedings on that occasion by Archbishop Eyre in his learned work on St. Cuthbert, and ask our readers with him if it was likely that the monks of the days of Mary and Elizabeth, who knew that their brethren in former centuries had wandered for years carrying the body of St. Cuthbert with them according to his dying wish sooner than leave it to the spoilers, would have failed to remove the venerated relics from a place of such danger as the vault where they were known to have been deposited? It is devoutly to be hoped that the day may yet come when we shall be able to honour his glorious relics in a fitting manner, and that the Catholics of England and Scotland may not be deprived for ever of their precious inheritance.

Glorious Saint Cuthbert, pray for your people of the English and Scottish borders! Stir them as you did of old. Light the beacon of faith on their hills, and spread the knowledge of the Truth more and more among them!

"THE JESUIT PLOT FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF OUR LIBERTIES"

I.

Bible Readings for the Protestant Alliance.

(*The quotations are from King James's Bible.*)

"Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come. The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?" (Matt. x. 22–25).

"Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake" (Luke vi. 22).

"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also" (John xv. 18–20).

"As concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against" (Acts xxviii. 22).

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour" (Exod. xx. 16).

II.

A Word on Equivocation.

It is equivocation to use words which have an element of truth in them, but are calculated and intended to mislead, of which practice the Protestant Alliance has just furnished a very edifying example. We have taken as our heading the title of a recent fly-sheet of theirs, which we henceforth refer to as P. A. These are P. A.'s words: "The Jesuits have published in their magazine, *The Month*, for October, 1889, a scheme containing what they describe as 'salutary measures,' which they hope to put in force if they gain the ascendancy in this country."

We naturally conclude that we have here an exposure of Jesuit hopes and purposes as they stood in 1889. No such thing. *The Month* for October, 1889, is open before us. On p. 184 we have an article, "A Jesuit Scheme for the Reformation of England." We find that the "Scheme" is a scheme drawn up by Father Parsons in the reign of Elizabeth, and presented by some one, some eighty years later, to James II. at his accession.

P. A. sets down seven points, implying that such are the aims of the present generation of living Jesuits in England. The first is the restoration of Church lands, on which *The Month* quotes without approving the opinion of Parsons, that the papal dispensation, granted under Queen Mary to the retainers of such lands, was invalid. The second is for "abolishing the law which

makes it necessary that this Protestant nation shall be governed by a Protestant Sovereign," about which law Parsons is silent; and his silence is less surprising when we consider that the said law was not enacted till about a hundred years after his death. *The Month* is silent also. Of the remaining five heads—a Catholic Parliament, suppression of heresy and heretical books, and the establishment of a military order and of the Inquisition—there is no trace whatever in the pages of *The Month*.

The writer in *The Month* qualifies Parsons's proposals in general as "salutary measures"; he further says, "his constructive scheme is that of a good and prudent man"; and again, "he is very practical"; and "the main features of his scheme are of permanent interest, not merely as a historical study, but as affording some valuable suggestions for the guidance of Catholics." This is the sum total of what *The Month* says in commendation of Parsons's Scheme as a whole. We are right, then, in saying that the element of fact in P. A.'s statement is slender enough, and very much in arrear of the impression which his words are calculated to convey of the avowed aims of the Society of Jesus as now existing in England. This practice we call *equivocation.*

III.

A Word on Education.

The best mark of an educated man is his power of estimating evidence. Let us suppose an attack made by a French writer on the character of the medical profession in this country, to the effect that English doctors generally connive at immoral practices. To prove this most serious charge against a reputable body of living men, not one

word of contemporary evidence, oral or documentary, is adduced; no testimony of patients now living; no indication that the accuser is personally acquainted with any English physician, or has seen so much as the outside of a London hospital, or could understand a medical book if he got one into his hands: but what? A collection of extracts from the works of English medical writers of all sorts—two lines from one, three lines from another—compiled by order of the French Directory in 1797 on purpose to poison the mind of Europe against this country, with which France was then at war.

Such a book was written against the Society of Jesus, and sanctioned by the Parliament of Paris in 1762, in order to bring about the suppression of the Society. The work appeared in English in 1839, under the title of *Principles of the Jesuits*. Armed with such a venerable old blunderbuss; carefully avoiding anything on moral matters published by the Society in England in recent years; not inquiring what text-books are now used at Stonyhurst and St. Beuno's; shrinking from living Jesuits and their pupils as if they were adders—P. A. proves easily to his own satisfaction that "the Jesuits teach that EQUIVOCATION, LYING, THEFT, PARRICIDE, MURDER, are permissible under certain circumstances!!!"

This makes an interesting case as a study of evidence alleged, and thereby of education presumable. We are bound to suppose that the evidence alleged satisfies P. A.: else, as an honest man, he could not indite the conclusion. Thence we might be led to form some conjecture of the extent to which P. A. could be called an educated man, but we refrain. What interests us is the very low power of estimating evidence, and therefore the very low standard of education, which he presumes in the British public, notwithstanding the millions of

money which we are spending on schools. Just consider. The statement in question is proved by five references. One is to "Ligouri's [*sic*] *Moral Theology*, vol. ii. p. 308, 329, 330," &c. P. A.'s acquaintance with the authors whom he names, we should think from this quotation, must be much on a par with the Biblical lore of one who quoted "*The Babel*, p. 26," &c. Does he suppose that St. Alphonsus Liguori was a Jesuit? Has he any idea of the way in which it is usual, and indeed necessary, to quote St. Alphonsus? Has he ever seen his work? P. A. goes on to mention the names of four Jesuit theologians, the latest of whom died in 1679: he knows them by the pages of the French work which we have mentioned: all the evidence he has to offer is the number of the page, thus: "Suarez — *Extraits des Assertions*, p. 300; Emmanuel Sa —*ib.*, p. 349; Gobat — *ib.*, p. 437; Fagundez—*ib.*, p. 404, 411, 413," &c.

These are the entire references and the whole proof. He may have more than one reason for withholding the information what this *Extraits des Assertions* may mean.

Altogether an interesting study in Protestant Evidences!

About occasional parricide, we have taken the trouble to verify the reference as it is to be found in *Principles of the Jesuits*, p. 212. Gobat is there quoted as quoting Fagundez to the effect that "it is lawful for a son to rejoice at the murder of his parent committed by himself in a state of drunkenness, on account of the great riches thence acquired by inheritance." On which saying of Fagundez, Gobat writes: "Since then it is to be supposed on the one hand that the parricide was blameless, as well from deficiency of deliberation caused by drunkenness, as through the absence of premeditation; and on the other that very great riches would

result from this parricide, an effect which is either good or certainly not bad; it follows that the doctrine of Father Fagundez, which may seem a paradox, is true in theory, although it may be dangerous in practice." Now let this speculation of Fagundez or Gobat be as pernicious as you please—we have no mind to pronounce upon it—still as a matter of evidence it is plain that they are both far away from saying that a son may ever under any circumstances make up his mind to kill his father. Still less is the entire Society of Jesus chargeable with the guilt of maintaining that parricide is permissible under certain circumstances. P. A., then, is deficient, or supposes his readers deficient, in the power of estimating evidence. That is, P. A. is either himself an ill-educated man, or he writes for the ill-educated.

Would it be possible for the L.C.C. to open to the scribes of the Protestant Alliance an Academy for Young Gentlemen, or shall we say for Old Women, whose education has been neglected?

IV.

A Word on Manliness.

We gather from official returns before us, giving names and addresses, that there were in England, Scotland, and Wales, on or about the 1st of January, 1898, just 583 Jesuits of all arms of the service. Of these not one is living in hiding. Every one is known by all about him, who care to observe him at all, for a Jesuit or Roman ecclesiastic of some sort. They are the most knowable body of men in the country. They have no wish to hide, and never will go into hiding till the Protestant Alliance comes to have things all its own way, puts the clock back, and re-enacts the Penal Laws. If Govern-

ment so willed, these 583 could all be paraded in Trafalgar Square next week—Government to bear the expenses of the show.

Now suppose the rumour spread that on the 5th November next these 583 intended to march upon the two Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and put all the Protestants they found there to the sword. The police, we will suppose, is powerless, the army unreliable, and even the well-proved prowess of the Dons is for this occasion only in abeyance. Does any one expect that there would be a panic at those seats of learning? On the contrary, nothing would please the younger members of the University better than to see the Jesuits come on to the attack; the Undergraduates would be well able to protect themselves. Now listen to the Protestant Alliance; "Fellow countrymen! These men [these redoubtable 583] now demand from Parliament such license as would enable them to rob us of our freedom of speech and destroy our Civil and Religious Liberties." How ever would they go about it? We had thought that John Bull was well able to protect himself! that the elephant would not tremble before a mouse! But it is not John Bull who trembles; only the Protestant Alliance has lost its wits.

Perhaps it is cruel to challenge a man when you see him in a "blue funk." But we will make one proposal, which calls not for any great exertion of manliness, and which, if accepted and brought to act, would go a long way to dissipate the alarm of the Protestant Alliance. Let any one member of the body—we will say, the Secretary—let him call upon any Cabinet Minister, or ex-Cabinet Minister, even upon Sir William Harcourt himself, and ask him, upon his honour as a gentleman, to give a true answer to this question: *Has the behaviour of the Jesuits in this country*

ever caused your Cabinet five minutes' anxiety and alarm? We have no doubt of the answer, that the Society of Jesus, whatever it may have been in the past, is now quite a negligeable quantity in the political world.

Then why keep harmless men under the ban of the law? And why, oh why, after 50,000 of the P.A. fly-sheets misrepresenting them "have already been freely circulated," as the advertisement tells us, require "funds to circulate 20,000,000 copies throughout the country"? There is a line of Virgil—

Non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis.

("Spare me such aid, and send no such defenders.")

If we had the cause of Protestantism at heart, we should apply this line to the Protestant Alliance and its scribes, until the L.C.C. has provided for their better education. But they propose to cover the country with twenty million monuments of their stupidity—or worse.

Catholic Truth Society, 69 Southwark Bridge Road, S.E.
[Price 2s. per 100.]

TELL ME, ART THOU A CATHOLIC?

Y. ARE you a Protestant? Z. No. A Protestant merely protests against what he takes to be errors in religion. A Protestant, as such, is committed to no definite, positive religious teaching whatever. Your Atheist is your best Protestant, since he protests against all religious teaching. Nowhere, whether in Scripture or in the old formularies of Christianity, is there any recognition either of the name or of the thing, Protestantism. I object to be called by a name which puts me in the same class with Atheists, a name, too, unblessed of God and of his Holy Spirit.

Y. Well then, you are a Catholic? Z. Certainly; as the Creed says, *I believe in the Holy Catholic Church.*

Y. Yes, but you know that Creed is daily repeated by Protestants who glory in the name of Protestant. Being a Catholic, and not being a Protestant, I presume you are a Roman Catholic Z. Oh dear, no; I am an English Catholic. I am a member of the Church of England, the Church

by law established. The Bishops of that Church are my Bishops, and them I obey. Y. You do? Z. Yes, whenever they command me lawfully and canonically.

Y. But are you sure the Pope does not command you lawfully and canonically? Z. Quite sure, for by our Article xxxvii., *The Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this Realm of England.* Y. Nor ever had? Z. Speaking of matter of fact, not of right, I must admit that for a long time the jurisdiction of the Pope was to a very great extent allowed in England, although not without protest. Y. For how long a time? Z. A thousand years, more or less. Y. I have just been looking at a letter written by Archbishop Winchelsey of Canterbury to Pope Boniface VIII., bearing date 17 December, 1297. It begins:—"To the most holy Father and Lord in Christ, the Lord Boniface, Sovereign Pontiff of the Holy Roman and Universal Church, his devoted and humble Robert, by divine permission Archbishop of Canterbury, and his fellow-bishops and suffragans, with all subjection and reverence, (offer) kisses of the blessed feet." After mentioning certain arrangements which the English Bishops had recently made with the King about Church property, the letter goes on: "that if anything in these arrangements has been done or presumed, through simplicity or ignorance, contrary to the mind of the above-mentioned Constitution (Boniface's celebrated decree, *Clericis laicos*), it should be entirely subjected to the file of your correction and emendation." Documents of this

style are extant in scores. They seem to prove that the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome was allowed in this country to a very great extent indeed; in fact was paramount and absolute in causes spiritual. Z. But there were protests again and again. Y. Against the jurisdiction itself, or against the manner in which it was exercised? You might for instance complain against the way in which ecclesiastical patronage was exercised by the Crown, and the particular appointments made, without in any way denying that the Crown had or should have such patronage. Z. I admit, the protests were rather against the way in which the jurisdiction was exercised, till at last in the sixteenth century the English Church took the matter into her own hands, reformed herself, and abolished Papal jurisdiction altogether. Y. Pardon me, but my reading of history is that first Henry VIII., for reasons that shall not be mentioned, took a certain matter into his own hands, bullied the clergy, and wrung from them a surrender of their allegiance to the Pope; for the remainder of his reign Henry acted as though he were Pope in England. This and the consequences that followed from it were reversed by his daughter Mary. After her, Queen Elizabeth and her Ministers did Henry's anti-Roman work over again. This time it was a lay movement more clearly even than under Henry. Not one of the Bishops who held English Sees at Mary's death consented to be a Bishop of the new Establishment, or to consecrate any Bishop for that Establishment. The Queen therefore cleared them

all out, by the same authority as that assumed by her royal father. She sent two Royal Commissions north and south, to reform the English Church, and for the time being suspended all other ecclesiastical jurisdiction except that held by these two Commissions. When the new hierarchy started, she, to use her own vigorous expression, "made" the Bishops; she did not consecrate them herself, but consecration does not give jurisdiction; that was supplied by the Crown. Of the lower clergy, some fled across the seas, sooner or later; some used the new Prayer-Book in Church, and said Mass in private houses; some conformed willingly, but there was great scarcity of clergy for years, and great loss of esteem for the clergy of the new order. For the nation at large,—you have seen a horse take its medicine? that is how the "New Learning," as it was called, went down against many consciences. So the Court and the nobility "pulled the ivy down from the walls" of the English Church, not without "loosening some of the stones," witness the ruins still to be seen. In return, they "restored the Chalice in Holy Communion to the lay people," —and took away the Real Presence.

Z. That is your reading of the history. But, history apart, we have but to consider who are the recognized Bishops of the country where we live. Why, the men who fill the old sees, Canterbury, York, London, Durham, Winchester, Salisbury, and the rest: theirs is the jurisdiction, inherent in the Church of Christ wherever it exists. Christ gives jurisdiction, wherever He sees His Church, to

the Bishops ruling that Church, and to the priests under them. To come in where there are Bishops ruling already, and set up a new Church authority alongside of that actually existing, is to be an intruder. The Pope has intruded his Bishops into this country, into the dioceses of the lawful Catholic Bishops. That is a schismatical act. The Roman Catholic Bishops in England are schismatics; so are all who hold with them.

Y. Is the Bishop of Rome himself a schismatic? Z. Oh, no, he is the true Catholic Bishop of Rome, and the Archbishop of Paris is the true Archbishop there. Roman Catholics are true Catholics in Catholic countries, but not in England. Y. All true Catholic Bishops are in communion one with another, are they not? I see you don't like to answer. Never mind answering then, but think over a difficulty or two I am going to put against what you have said. Nearly thirty years ago, there was a General Council. The Roman Catholic Bishops of England went and sat there, as lawful Bishops among other lawful Bishops. The Prelates of the Sees that you have mentioned were not even invited. And if they had been invited and had gone, they would not have felt at all at home in the Council. If you are right, there is deplorable disunion in the Church, for the unity of which Christ prayed so earnestly (John xvii.). Is it not more likely that Christ's prayer was heard, and that the Church of England is no part of the one holy Catholic and undivided Church?

Z. But how can that be, when the Church of

England has been established in the land for centuries? The very fact of her establishment makes her Catholic, and clothes her with spiritual authority. Y. You are confounding two very different things, natural civil authority and supernatural spiritual authority. Wherever there is a people formed, natural civil authority rises up among them by the gift of God, and an established government becomes a lawful government. But the authority that rules the Christian Church is supernatural; it is a special concession of Christ, and follows the lines that He was pleased to trace out for it, and no other.

Z. I know, you mean to say that Christ gave all authority to St. Peter, and that through him, as a sort of mediator, the other Apostles got whatever authority they had. Y. Pardon me, you are mistaken there; that view is held by no Roman Catholic divine. We say that the Lord made St. Peter head of the Church and head of the Apostles, but that the authority of the other Apostles did not come to them through St. Peter, but was given them by our Lord immediately; and among the Apostles in this connection, I specially name St. Paul. Paul, *an apostle, not from men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ* (Gal. i. 1.).

Z. You surprise me. Do you then say that your Bishops also have jurisdiction immediately from Jesus Christ and not through the Pope? Y. That I should not say. A Bishop, the Bishop of Rome alone excepted, is not quite on the same footing as an Apostle. A Bishop's jurisdiction is

limited to his own diocese; an Apostle had jurisdiction all the world over. A Bishop is appointed, one way or another, by the Pope, and has his jurisdiction from the Pope; an Apostle was appointed by Christ, and received jurisdiction from Christ immediately. A Bishop is not infallible; an Apostle was. In the power of Order alone is a Bishop on absolutely the same footing as the Apostles; in that respect, as you well say, "all Bishops are in themselves equal": they are equal in Order, but not in jurisdiction. The fulness of the Apostolic office has gone down in one line of Bishops only, that of the successors of St. Peter. St. Peter alone of the Apostles has had successors in the Apostolate.

Z. It is some gain to know exactly what you hold, even though one does not agree with you. My studies of history convince me that the Papacy was the result of circumstances. Y. You remind me of the people whose studies have convinced them that the universe is the result of circumstances. We do not deny the force of circumstances, and the influence of environment; but we say that God's providence was at the back of the circumstances and contrived the environment. As regards the Papacy, we say that Christ instituted the Papacy by the commission which he gave to St. Peter, and then took care that the active exercise of Papal power should develop as the Church grew, and as the action of a central authority became imperative. Is not that just the difficulty in England at present—the absence of any central authority, which shall commend itself to the

acceptance of High Church and Low Church alike?

To come back to the term "Protestant," I rejoice to hear you repudiate it. You are wise in refusing to bear a name that would identify you with principles that you detest, and with persons who detest the principles that you build upon. Still, I think you have a right to the title of Protestant, if you like to bear it. Let me see. There is only one article, I think, of the Protestant creed, and that is put in two words, "No Popery." You subscribe, don't you, that article, "No Popery"? **Z.** I don't altogether like it. Much that I venerate and love—the Mass, the invocation of Saints, prayer for the dead—is commonly called Popery. I prefer the shorter formula, "No Pope." **Y.** Well, Pope is the principal part of Popery. I think you are qualified to call yourself a Protestant, if ever you wish it, so long as you protest against the Pope, and so long as you are in full communion with men who reiterate the denials of Catholic truth made by the original Protestants; so long, I mean, as you worship at the same altars, and belong to the same religious body, as the men who deny the Real Presence, deny the efficacy of sacramental absolution, deny Purgatory, and allow of no praying to Saints. My conclusion is, that while you are not a Roman Catholic, and while you cry "No Pope," you remain a *Protestant Catholic*, and that means something *un-Catholic*. No Roman, no Catholic!

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Was St. Aidan an Anglican?

BY THE REV. SYDNEY F. SMITH, S.J.

DR. LIGHTFOOT, whose premature death we all so much deplore, had occasion to preach on several occasions in places memorable on account of their part in the early ecclesiastical history of Northumbria.

These sermons were published in 1891 (after the preacher's death), the little volume containing some additional sermons on certain post-Reformation occupants of the see of Durham, in pursuance of the ruling idea that continuity between the Catholic past and the Anglican present has never been interrupted.

With these more recent celebrities we are not concerned. But, as the sermons on the early Northumbrian saints and missionaries are considered by Anglicans, especially in the North, to afford a valuable support to the continuity theory, we shall do well to examine into the matter.

> It was not from Imperial Rome, nor from Kent, the handmaid of Rome, that Northumbria was destined to receive her Christianity. A larger and freer spirit must be stamped on the English Church in her infancy, never to be obliterated in maturer age.[1]

In these words we have the key-note to the preacher's contention. The spirit of the modern English (that is, Anglican) Church is a spirit of freedom. It is this

[1] *Leaders of the Northern Church.* By the Right Rev. J. B. Lightfoot, D.D., late Bishop of Durham, p. 41.

which makes recognition of the Roman thraldom an impossibility to her, and it is her consolation to find that this self-same spirit, which she has so faithfully preserved, is congenital. She received it from the earliest of all her founders. For the founders in question were founders, not of the Northumbrian Church only, but of the entire English Church, one small corner in the south-east alone excepted. To Aidan, not to Augustine, must be attributed the conversion of every kingdom of the Heptarchy save that of Kent. "Augustine was the Apostle of Kent, but Aidan was the Apostle of England."[1] When we probe deeper and inquire into the cause of Aidan's success and Augustine's failure, we discover it in the power of "earnest, simple, self-denying lives, pleading with a force which no eloquence of words can command:"[2] the suggestion being that these qualities were deficient in the Roman missionaries led by St. Augustine. A tendency to disheartenment, want of courage to face persecution, imperfect realization of the difference between solid and superficial conversions, and other defects are imputed to the Roman, by contrast to the Celtic, missionaries. It would seem as if we were to understand that this better moral equipment, with the consequent success in the arduous labours of the apostolate, was the natural outcome of the alleged rejection by the Celtic missionaries of the Papal Supremacy; although the inference is hardly supported by the comparative results of Anglican and Catholic missionary effort in modern times. Such is the substance of Dr. Lightfoot's contention in the first four sermons of his little

[1] P. 11. [2] P. 10.

volume, a contention which in the sermons themselves is rather asserted than proved, but which is supported by some slight attempts at proof in the appended notes.

A few words first to give in outline the history of the planting of the Christian faith in this country. St. Augustine was sent by Pope Gregory the Great, in 596, with a few companions, to convert the island of Great Britain. The missionaries seem to have set out with some very natural trepidation of heart on their journey to the distant land where the Roman arms could afford them no protection. On their arrival in France, the reports reaching them of the ferocity of the islanders daunted their courage still more, and it required all the authority and persuasiveness of the intrepid Pontiff, who would have readily shared their dangers in his own person, to nerve them to their enterprise. Success, however—an easy success in the first instance—was in store for them. Ethelbert, King of Kent, was gained over almost at once, and the example of the monarch whom they revered and trusted, was followed generally by his subjects, and the see of Canterbury was founded in what had hitherto been the royal city. For a time the obvious course was to consolidate the work commenced. But after an interval of seven years an opportunity offered of establishing another Christian centre in the neighbouring East Saxon kingdom. Mellitus was sent to London, and the foundations of the original Cathedral of St. Paul's were laid. Failure, however, overtook this new effort, twelve years later, when the Christian King Sabert died, and his three Pagan sons succeeded him. Mellitus

was bidden to depart, and the fate even of Kentish Christianity hung for a time in the balance when Ethelbert's death, occurring about the same time, transferred the sceptre to his pagan son Eadbald. The latter danger was fortunately averted by the conversion of Eadbald, but though the sons of Sabert were all slain in battle after a short reign, some forty years intervened before the East Saxons would give heed again to the voice of the preacher.

After St. Augustine had been twenty years in his grave, an opportunity at last offered of making the truth known to the Angles of the North. Ethelburga, a sister of Eadbald, was chosen as his bride by Edwin, the Northumbrian Sovereign of Deira—Edwin, the son of that very Ella whose name had caused St. Gregory to say in his quaint manner, as he gazed on the white-skinned Anglian boys in the Roman slave-market, that Alleluias (*Ella*-luias) should sound in the land of Deira, and that it should soon be rescued from the wrath of God (*de ira Dei*). Eadbald demanded for his sister Ethelburga full liberty to profess her faith, and Edwin nobly replied that she should have it, and that he himself would embrace that faith, if on examination he found it to bear the marks of truth. Here was a bright prospect for St. Paulinus, now sent with the Princess as her chaplain.

For a time he had to wait for his harvest. Edwin was dilatory about his promised examination. But at length he was convinced, received Baptism, and joined with Paulinus in an active apostolate among his people. The people seem to have listened with eager ears. Bede gives a glowing account of the

plentiful conversions, and mentions by way of illustration how at one time at Yevering, at the foot of the Cheviots, Paulinus was occupied for thirty-six consecutive days in an uninterrupted labour of first instructing, and then baptizing in the waters of the Glen, the crowds who flocked to him from all the villages and places round. This was in Bernicia, the northern division of Edwin's kingdom. In Deira, the southern division, a similar sight could be witnessed on the banks of the Swale near Catterick. Nor did Paulinus confine his labours to the provinces north of the Humber. His zeal looked beyond, and we find him presently in Lindsey, the modern Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire, repeating the same happy successes. At Lincoln itself the Governor and his family were converted, and a church erected near the site of the modern Cathedral; and at Tiovulfingacestir, probably Southwell, the Trent emulated the Glen and the Swale, and lent its waters to a multitude of neophytes. To the impulse of Paulinus also we ought fairly to attribute the apostolate undertaken by Edwin in East Anglia. At the time this East Anglian effort was not crowned with solid success. Though many embraced the Faith in company with their King, Eorpwald, the latter was shortly afterwards martyred, and the province relapsed into heathenism. For a time only, however. It was permanently regained three years later, under Sigbert, the new King, who had been converted during a foreign exile. Shortly after his accession to the East Anglian throne, a Burgundian monk of the name of Felix crossed over into Kent and offered his services to Archbishop Honorius. Honorius sent him on to

Sigbert, by whom he was gratefully received. And thus he became the Apostle of East Anglia.

To return to the northern kingdom. When the work of evangelizing it had lasted six years, and was full of the happiest promise, a great disaster befell the land. Penda, King of Mercia, the central sovereignty of the island, in league with Cadwallon, King of North Wales—the first a pagan, the second worse than a pagan in his bitter antipathy to the Christianized Anglians—invaded the dominions of Edwin, and defeated him in a decisive battle at Hatfield, in south-eastern Yorkshire. Edwin himself was slain on the field, and then ensued a "very great slaughter in the Church and people of Northumbria." The Welsh King, particularly, spared neither women nor children; he put them all to a cruel death amidst great torments, and for a length of time harried all their provinces, in the resolve to exterminate the entire Anglian race from the territory of Britain. St. Paulinus, apparently, saw no object in remaining where for the present little work could be done, and, moreover, deemed it his duty to escort the Kentish Princess, with whom he had been charged, back to her brother's dominions. He left his companion, James the Deacon, to supply his place so far as was needful, and we may suppose, in the defect of any positive record, that his intention was to return to the work himself when the storm should have blown over. However, the see of Rochester falling vacant at the time of his arrival in the South, he was appointed by Honorius of Canterbury to fill it.

The storm in Northumbria lasted for a year—"a year hateful to all good men"—and then the air was

clear once more. St. Oswald overthrew Cadwallon in the famous Battle of Heavenfield, and recovered all his uncle Edwin's dominions. Having spent many years of exile among the Scots, and received Christian Baptism and instruction from the monks of Iona, it was natural he should send thither for pastors to whose care he could commit his people. The result was the sending of St. Aidan, followed presently by many others from the same source; and thus the evangelization of Northumbria was commenced anew by these Celtic monks. Aidan fixed his see at Lindisfarne, and thus caused Bernicia rather than Deira, of the two provinces of the kingdom, to be the centre of the new missionary operations. We have heard from Bishop Lightfoot, in this faithful to the account given by the Venerable Bede, what manner of man St. Aidan was, and how his gentle saintliness told with the people.

Churches were built in various places, crowds used to come with joy to hear the Word preached, possessions and territories were given by royal munificence for the erection of monasteries, English children were taught by Scottish teachers, and learned at the same time both more advanced studies and the observance of regular discipline.

No further interruption was destined to stay the course of Northumbrian Christianity. After a nine years' reign Oswald was, indeed, slain in battle, probably at Oswestry, by the same Penda who had slain his uncle Edwin. But, though Deira and Bernicia were divided again for a short time, each received a Christian ruler, and after a few years Oswy, the brother of Oswald, united them both under

his sceptre, and the succession was secured to his family. Aidan himself was spared for sixteen years to superintend the progress of his work, and after his death there were Finan and Colman and their successors to continue it.

Nor was it only in the Northumbrian provinces that the Celtic mission from Iona gathered its fruits. During the episcopate of Finan, Peada, son of Penda, sought Baptism at his hands and begged for some monks, who were given him to convert the Mid-Anglians. An attempt was also made to re-convert the East Saxons by Cedd, one of St. Aidan's disciples, and, after the death of Penda on the field of Winwæd, Diuma was sent to establish at Lichfield a bishopric of Mercia.

This was the extent of the Celtic labours. Under influences altogether independent of Columba, the West Saxon kingdom was evangelized. Birinus was sent over by Pope Honorius, with a commission to evangelize the Mid-Saxons. Landing, however, in Hampshire, he found the West Saxons in need of conversion, and felt that he would be fulfilling best the spirit of his charge by bestowing his first labours upon them. This was a few years before the arrival of St. Aidan in the North. The work of Birinus, very soon after its inauguration, had to pass through a crisis, but it came out safely, and, after the death of Birinus, was taken up and carried to completion by Agilbert, a Frankish Bishop, and other successors. The only English race still remaining Pagan was that of the South Saxons. The distinction of effecting their conversion was reserved for St. Wilfrid in 681, during one of his unjust exiles from Northumbria.

With the aid of this slight sketch, it is possible to estimate Dr. Lightfoot's contention that Aidan, not Augustine, was the Apostle of England. As Catholics, we have no motive for undervaluing the work done by the monks of Iona. They and the missionaries from the Continent are cherished with equal veneration by ourselves now as they ever were by our Catholic ancestors. We regard them all equally as our fathers in the faith, and they while living regarded one another as ministers of the same faith and fellow-labourers in the same good cause.

> Aidan (says Bede) was deservedly loved by all, even by those who thought differently about the Pasch; and not only by persons of ordinary station, for he was held in like reverence by the Bishops themselves, Honorius of Canterbury and Felix of the East Anglians.[1]

When, however, we are required in favour of St. Aidan to dispossess St. Augustine of his traditional title of Apostle of England, accorded to him by all previous generations, we may well ask on what grounds.

Former ages have been unhesitating in awarding the title to St. Augustine and to him only. In the Council of Clovesho, for instance, in 747, it was decreed:

> That the birthday of the blessed Pope Gregory, as also the day of death, falling on May 26th, of St. Augustine, Archbishop and Confessor, who, sent by the aforesaid Pope, our Father St. Gregory, brought to the English race the knowledge of faith, the Sacrament of Baptism, and the knowledge of the heavenly country, be honoured and venerated by all as is becoming.[2]

[1] *Eccles. Hist.* iii. 25.
[2] Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, p. 368.

Surely they were better able to know then than modern Anglicans can know now, what was the comparative impression made upon the country by the different workers and classes of workers, who, not further back than a century and a half, had founded their Church? And they tell us out of this their fuller knowledge, that the original and the dominating impulse in the evangelization of the country was St. Augustine's not St. Aidan's. Now this is just what is ordinarily meant by apostleship. The title belongs to the labourer who lays the foundations, and it is not necessary that he should have personally carried the building founded to its completion, or that he should have extended the borders of the Church to every province of the nation.

What St. Augustine did was to found the Church in the kingdom of Kent, and thereby establish a basis for Christian rule and influence in the land. We can well understand why he did not do more. His episcopate lasted but six years, he had necessarily but a very few colleagues of his own, and the Britons to whom he applied for aid refused it in their un-Christian hatred of their Teutonic enemies. In spite of this dearth of helpers, he made an attempt to found two other bishoprics—one at Rochester, the other at London—and it was not his fault if the accession of the heathen princes expelled Mellitus from London before the newly-sown faith of the East Saxons had had time to mature.

To St. Augustine's impulse we must also attribute the grand work of St. Paulinus in the North, although it did not commence till twenty years after the Saint's death. We must call it a grand work, for so it was.

Already we have heard Bede's account of what was done; but because a terrible persecution overtook it in its infancy and interrupted its course, we are asked by Dr. Lightfoot to regard the labours of Paulinus as a mere exhibition of "feverish activity." Paulinus, it is alleged, had not the prudence to think of consolidating his work: his only anxiety was to multiply converts. Consequently, when the trial came, "it was as if a sponge had passed over the land." How amusingly unconscious Anglicans are of the inconsistencies into which their position leads them! Augustine can spare no monks for external work, and seeks to consolidate that already begun. In consequence, he is blamed for his want of zeal. Paulinus is beset by vast multitudes seeking admission into the fold. He spends himself day and night in giving such preliminary instruction as was possible under the circumstances, and then administers Baptism. In consequence, he is accused of feverish activity. What sort of historical justice is this? Paulinus could not do much towards consolidating his work, because he had neither the means nor the time. He did what he could: he made a beginning; and doubtless would have proceeded to mature what was in its infancy had his destiny allowed him. It is true he left when Cadwallon was devastating the land, and Dr. Lightfoot considers this to evince faint-heartedness. No doubt it would have been magnificent to stay and court martyrdom. But would the useless sacrifice of life have been more according to the dictates of Christian prudence than a temporary withdrawal, the more so as he did leave another to sustain the neophytes in their trial, one who perhaps was the

better fitted for that office, just because he was the less known?

And by what authority does Dr. Lightfoot tell us that the work of Paulinus was altogether blotted out? Bede is the only informant that we have, and he certainly does not say so much. At most it is Dr. Lightfoot's inference from Bede's story, and, we submit, it is a false inference. There was only a year's interval between the departure of Paulinus and the coming of Aidan. Bede himself tells us that St. Hilda had been christened by Paulinus, and he has preserved to us a touching account, told in his own hearing by one old man, of the veneration felt for Paulinus when he baptized in the Trent. It is reasonable to think that, although St. Aidan of course added many besides to the Church, a large number, the nucleus in fact, of the flock which gathered round him on his arrival was formed out of those whom Paulinus had converted and baptized. They were won back rather than won, and many of them not so much won back as preserved to the faith which they had not abandoned at heart during the persecution. There was continuity, in other words, between the work of Aidan and that of Paulinus: and so Paulinus more than Aidan, and, behind Paulinus, Augustine, was the Apostle of the North.

Such is Augustine's claim to the title of Apostle. What about Aidan's? Aidan and his monks did undoubtedly a grand work. The faith of the neophytes was no longer in their days subjected to the trial of royal persecutions, and this made the labours of the missionary easier. We must note this difference between the circumstances under which the Celtic

and the Roman missionaries respectively laboured, because it ought to enter into the comparison which Anglicans have challenged in the view of disparaging the Romans. The difference is in itself, however, matter only for thanksgiving, by no means for disparagement of the labours of the Celts. As regards the extent of their part in the conversion of the country, we may call Aidan co-apostle, with Paulinus, of the North; and we may call his disciple Cedd an apostle of the East Saxons, and his other disciple Chad the apostle of Mercia. We may also award Aidan his share in the conversion of the South Saxons, whose immediate apostle was his still more famous disciple St. Wilfrid: although Dr. Lightfoot must have experienced a difficulty in comprising Wilfrid's works in the category of successes attributable to the freer spirit of the Celtic missionaries.

But it is time to pass to the more essential question, whether there was any such difference in faith between Aidan and Augustine as Anglicans have lately taken to maintain?

The story of the efforts made by St. Augustine to establish relations with the British clergy, is familiar to us all. There was a meeting under an oak-tree, somewhere near Cirencester, between the two parties, which came to nought because they could not arrange the terms. St. Augustine seems to have been aware that there was some difference of practice between the Britons and the rest of Christendom, the result of their great isolation from the centre of ecclesiastical life and teaching, and he had considered with himself how much of this dissentient practice he could conscientiously tolerate. He required of the Britons

only that they should celebrate their Pasch at the same time as the rest of the world, that they should observe the rites of the Roman Church in the administration of Baptism, and that they should co-operate in converting the Anglians. Of these points the last was a matter of obligation under the precept of Christian charity, and the second must always remain obscure to us through the lack of further data. As regards the first we have full information. The Britons differed from the rest of the world in their assignment of Easter in two respects: first, in following a computation of Paschal cycles which, though formerly in use at Rome, had on account of its defects been superseded by one more accurate; secondly, in keeping the feast on the fourteenth day itself of the Paschal moon when that day happened to be a Sunday, instead of transferring it to the twenty-first, the Sunday following.

After some negotiations the Britons rejected the overtures of St. Augustine, and the question arises, what were the real motives of the rejection? Anglicans, not deeming the points mentioned to involve any important principle, have concluded that the real issue lay behind, and was that of the Papal claims. So, for instance, Dr. Bright, who censures Lingard as follows:

> Lingard argues that the subjects of Papal authority and British independence did not come into consideration.[1] This is futile. The British delegates could not fail to know that Augustine did come to them as specially empowered from Rome. And their reverence for Rome did not, in

[1] *Anglo-Saxon Church*, i. 380.

their view, commit them to obedience to its emissary. But it *must* have done so, had it included a belief in Papal Supremacy.[1]

If, however, these subjects had come into consideration, Bede must have known it from his authorities. The dialogue, too, would have taken a different form altogether. There was no motive on either side for concealing the true issue, if it was that alleged. Dr. Bright's mistake is to assume that conduct is always strictly logical. If it were so, the inference from resistance and disobedience to rejection of authority would be sound. As it is not, the inference is unsound.

What then were the real motives by which the Britons were actuated? That St. Augustine's pride in not rising to receive their envoys counted for very much is not conceivable. Judging from the circumstances, we may set down dislike of the Saxons, their race-foes, as the main ground of the British refusal. Still, probably each of St. Augustine's demands was repulsive to the Britons. Religious rites and usages, although only involving discipline, may through long custom become intensely precious. This very matter of Easter computation supplies us with an apt illustration from our own experience. When the suggestion is made that, in the interests of practical convenience, Easter should be a fixed instead of a moveable feast, it is always urged that no principle can possibly be involved in the proposal. Yet what Catholic does not instinctively feel that the change would cut him to the quick, and that if, what is of course inconceivable, the Pope could be got at by

[1] *Early English Church History*, p. 83.

the advocates of change and should prescribe according to their wishes, it would require of us an almost heroic exercise of obedience to submit?

We are to conclude, then, that no evidence of difference of creed between St. Augustine and the Britons can be inferred from the occurrences at Augustine's oak. And this is to the point, although we are immediately concerned with the faith of Aidan and the Northern Celts, not of the Celts in Wales. It is to the point, because the faith of all the Celts was confessedly the same, and one argument advanced by Anglicans for the alleged "independence" of Aidan is the alleged "independence" of the Britons. It is to the point again, because we have in the Easter controversy between the supporters of Colman, Aidan's successor, and those of Wilfrid, which came to a head at the conference of Whitby, sixty years later, a mere reproduction of the previous dispute at the oak. In Aidan's time, we are told by Bede, his error in celebrating the Pasch was tolerated. He was so respected and venerated by all, that those who knew better did not like to trouble him about an observance which he would have found it so hard to surrender. But after his death the inconvenience arising out of the clash between the two observances grew more acute and caused the scandal of differing from the Universal Church in so sacred a matter to be more fully realized.

The crisis was reached one year, when King Oswy, following the Celtic computation, began his Easter festivities whilst his Kentish Queen was just addressing her mind to the mournful ceremonies of Holy Week. Then the conference of Whitby was

held. The Celtic representatives were Colman, Bishop of Lindisfarne, with his clerics from Scotland, Bishop Cedd, who had preached to the East Saxons, and Abbess Hilda of Whitby. On the other side were Agilbert, Bishop of the West Saxons, Wilfrid, James the Roman deacon left behind by Paulinus, and Tuda, a Celt from Southern Ireland. Also there were present Kings Oswy and Alchfrid, the former inclining to the Celtic, the latter to the Roman usage. Colman expounded the argument for his own side, relying on the authority of St. Columba and the supposed authority of St. John. Wilfrid replied, with some unnecessary heat of words, but with an excellent exposition of the motives demanding compliance with the Catholic custom, drawn partly from the reasons by which the Universal Church had been moved to adopt her method, partly from the general duty of obedience. Dealing with the authority of St. Columba pleaded by his opponents, he attributed that Saint's error to the absence of more accurate information in his distant dwelling-place, and expressed confidence that he would have abandoned it had the information arrived in his days. That thus he had suffered no harm from his error, which however would not be the case with the present generation of his sons, who would certainly sin if they contemned the decrees of the Apostolic See and the Universal Church. For were St. Columba and his monks of higher authority than the blessed Prince of the Apostles, to whom the Lord said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it, and I will give thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven"?

This appeal brought up King Oswy, who asked of Colman if such words were truly said by our Lord to St. Peter. On receiving the acknowledgment that they were, he rejoined, "This then is the door-keeper whom I will not resist, but as far as my knowledge and power goes, I will obey all his decrees, lest perchance when I approach the doors of the Kingdom of Heaven, there be none to open, he turning his back to me to whom the keys are proved to have been given."

The words of the Gospel brought home forcibly to the mind of the King the necessity of obedience to him whom God had placed over His Church, blessed Peter, ever living in the line of his successors. The effect on Cedd was the same. So was the effect on Eata and many of the monks of Colman's own Abbey of Lindisfarne: so probably was it on Hilda of Whitby, since she continued at her post under the rectified observance: so certainly it was on many others, as we learn from Bede, who says, "All present agreed with the King, the leaders from their seats, the commoner sort from the place where they stood."

Colman, with a few others, alone continued to resist the change. They returned to Scotland, "in order to treat with their own people there what should be done." The phrase here used is noticeable. We may fairly gather from it that even Colman was not altogether sure of a point concerning which so many of his previous adherents had been convinced by the discussion held. He wanted light, and went to seek it of those in whom he had confidence. That he ever passed over himself to the Catholic observance does not appear, but the Celtic Christians had all

accepted it within the space of half a century from 664, the date of the Council of Whitby. Those in South Ireland had even accepted it thirty years earlier, according to Bede, "in deference to the admonitions of the Bishop of the Apostolic See." The Northern Irish accepted it in 704, convinced by the reasoning of Adamnan, the then Abbot of St. Columba's own monastery at Iona. Adamnan was less successful with his own people, but these too were gained over twelve years later by the Anglian Egbert. In Wales, nourished probably by the intense animosity felt by its inhabitants for their English neighbours, the erroneous system held out longer. It was not completely extinguished till the commencement of the ninth century. But, as a set off against this, we find the Welsh consistently regarded by English writers as in schism on account of their attitude towards the rest of the Christian world.

From these facts we are able to see how little there is in common between the position taken up by modern Anglicans and that of these ancient Celtic Christians. The Anglican position is one of protest based on a conscious theory that the "Bishop of Rome hath no authority in this realm of England," the authority which he claims belonging of right only to the English Crown. The attitude of the Celtic monks was not based on any theoretical differences in regard to the ultimate seat of authority between themselves and the rest of the Christian world. It was merely an attitude of practical protest against a particular measure, and based on the very strong feeling that the usage to which they had been so long accustomed, and into which they had, so to speak,

grown, ought not to be abandoned. We may call this, as we have called it higher up, disobedience: refusal to obey a recognized authority as distinguished from refusal to recognize the authority commanding: refusal, too, to obey, not of the baser sort, but refusal arising out of the mistaken persuasion that the particular order issued was in violation of a most sacred obligation.

Let it however be granted, for the sake of argument, that the Anglican thesis is completely proved: that Welsh and Irish and Scottish[1] were in their origins quite as Anglicans are now. What then? Are they brought by this a whit nearer the establishment of their pet theory, that in the days of Henry and Elizabeth no breach took place in the continuity which they claim to hold with the Church of the Dunstans and the Anselms, the Cuthberts and the De Burys? If we are to say that the Celtic Church of Northumbria did differ, on the point of Roman Supremacy, from the rest of the world, we must say also that it was of short survival. It gave way at once before the influx of what was deemed to be fuller light at Whitby. It retired to a remote island off the coast of Mayo, there also soon to lose all traces of its peculiar usages. Meanwhile in Northumbria all classes hastened to harmonize their beliefs and practices with those of their southern and continental brethren: and it is from them, not from the Celts—that is, supposing the two to have represented essentially different creeds—that the later English Church, the Church of the Anglo-Saxon and mediæval periods, derives its origin.

[1] These terms are used, here and throughout, for convenience' sake, as they are understood nowadays.

THREE CHRISTMASES.

By Mrs. William Maude.

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS.

News ! news ! of the Trinity
And Mary and Joseph from over the sea !
In an ox-stall this night we saw
A Babe and a Maid without a flaw :
There was an old man there beside,
His hair was white and hood was wide,
And as we gazed that thing upon,
Those twain knelt down to the Little One !

William Morris.

The trees stretch out white arms against the blue, the yews stand dark and silent. The snowflakes pass them and cover up the church-yard graves—the ancient yews cut into strange fantastic forms: the little children point to them and call them the twelve Apostles, with one for our Blessed Lady and another for our Lord. All day long the big bells have been swinging and clamouring to the frosty air, "Christ's Mass to-day !—Christ is born !"

The sun peeps out athwart a snow-cloud and creeps into the old-world church with its mighty walls and belfry tower. It has stood so since the first Henry's reign, the quaint yews grouped about it, and a wealth of sculpture half moss-grown over its iron-studded door. Snow falling,

snow drifting, snow dazzling everywhere! so white and still without; and within, amongst the glimmering lights and solemn arches, a little world of gold brocade and jewelled sword hilts, high heels tapping up the aisle over fresh greenery and aromatic herbs strewn for the great feast; moreover, it is her ladyship's christening day, and all the great folk are to attend.

The tiny thing lies on a velvet cushion, half smothered in a gold lace cap and costly embroidery; two of the stiff brocaded dames are sponsors, and so her little ladyship is carried to the font. The priest's voice murmurs the solemn words, the acolyte holds up the big book, his little rosy face looking for all the world like one of the winged cherubs in the carving overhead.

Someone comes rudely pushing through the crowd of silks and laces—a woman in a tattered cloak with snowflakes resting on her head—a wild haggard figure, making her way past all the fine dainty ladies and gentlemen, who draw back their silken trains and turn on their heels in dismay.

"Good Lord! and who may this be?" and "Heart alive! she's a mad creature and may work us some harm!"

"Save us and sain us! what ill luck brings her here?"

One or two of the young gentlemen and ladies are tittering as she makes her way up to the priest: all the velvet coifs are in a ruffle, peering and peeping over each other's shoulders to see what is going forward at the front.

The poor creature has sunk down trembling on the steps with something tightly clasped to her bosom.

"Turn her away for a bold hussy."

His lordship's command is about to be put into execution, when the priest interposes, and she cries out in a harsh rasping voice:

"Let my babe have her christenin' too! I've brought her though I'm 'most dead; let me see her made a Christian of, afore I die!"

She opens her tattered cloak and discloses a puny

creature, almost hidden in the bosom of her gown. Then her head falls forward with a sob of exhaustion. "My babe! my wee bantling, don't turn her away from Christ's door!"

"Nay, daughter, and she shall have christening," the priest says, bending down to whisper in her ear, "wait awhile——"

"Wait? Ah no!" she interrupts, wildly raising her voice. "Wait? I shall die first,—die! before I see my babe made one of Christ's; in pity take her now, give her christening now!"

There is a moment's pause of doubt and uncertainty, and then the priest says gravely:

"Be it so. She shall come to the font with the other babe for whom chrism was prepared this day, for is not Christ, our Lord, Father of rich and poor?"

He turns himself to those assembled, and his lordship frowns at the delay: but a gentle maiden at his side speaks up in soft, shy tones:

"Yea, my lord, let the stranger child have christening with my little cousin. I trow her lady-mother would have no one turned away."

Vainly the poor woman tries to rise that she may fulfil her mission; but now the time has come she seems unable to proceed.

The young lady leaves his lordship's side to kneel down beside her.

"Prythee, if such be your pleasure, I will stand for the babe. You are not fit, good mother, to walk another step."

Then she takes the little bundle, rags and tatters, against her gold brocade.

The priest leads down the aisle again to the old church porch, the young lady follows, carrying the beggar's child.

Ah, Mistress Molly, in the years to come God rewarded your lowly deed!

The christening party stood waiting, and his lordship chafed, for his temper was none of the best. The ladies

whispered in indignation, that her ladyship should be forced to tarry for a beggar's brat: and one of the dandy young gentlemen observed that Mistress Molly seemed to have a special liking for rags and ill odour.

"'Come into the Temple of God that thou mayest have part with Christ unto life everlasting,'"—hallowed words, that make the beggar's child partaker in the inheritance of the saints in light. The priest's stole is laid upon her, and Mistress Molly, looking shy and confused in the presence of so many, walks up the aisle with her strange burden. Now they stand again around the font, and two infants so strangely brought together—one born in high estate, the other a child of poverty—are signed with the Holy Cross. "Mary Elizabeth Winifreyde Walburga;" her tiny ladyship is restored to the courtly dame with great starched farthingale and ruff who stands ready to receive her, and her tumbled robes are being tenderly adjusted.

"What name?"

Mistress Molly is red as a peony, and the poor woman comes to her assistance, "Call my child after Christ's own mother, Blessed Lady Mary; she can't have a better name."

"Amen," said a deep voice, startling them all. "Woe to England in the coming time, when her sons and daughters shall call down shame on that dear Mother's name!"

A thrill runs through all the assembly. Who spoke? Did the voice come from behind the deep gothic arches? No one stirs. Who could have uttered such solemn warning? There are many-fangled doctrines afloat, and who would dare speak against her Majesty and the new religion? The Queen has shown herself in her true colours, but she will surely never go so far as to subvert the Old Religion in which she was born? The old men shake their heads, and their hearts tremble. Queen Mary had restored England to her birthright; will her present Majesty dare undo it?

Evening grey is stealing on; is it only the reflection of the snow outside that makes some faces grow so pale?

"'Receive this white garment, and see thou carry it

without stain.'" Which of these two will walk before the Lord in innocence, and keep unbroken her baptismal vows? In the hushed silence the solemn admonitions are given,—"'Receive this burning light, and keep thy baptism without blame. Keep the commandments of God, so that when the Lord shall come to the nuptials thou mayest meet Him in the company of all the Saints in the heavenly court, and have eternal life.'" Like a "still small voice" comes the parting blessing, "Vade in pace et Dominus sit tecum."

The last Amen has died amongst the solemn arches, and there follows a shimmering and rustling, and gliding away of satin and brocade; only a few silent worshippers remain to kneel where the little lamp burns softly in the Presence of the Lord.

When Mistress Molly can extricate herself from a crowd of admiring friends and kinsfolk at the church door, she turns back amongst the shadows to find the woman and her baby. Alas! they are gone, leaving no more traces behind than if a witch had carried both away upon her broomstick! Mistress Molly crosses herself in the deepening twilight—not that she believes in witchcraft, but the superstitious fancies of the times have their effect upon her, and she begins to think there is something of the "black art" in the strange woman and her babe, who came and disappeared again so mysteriously. She is disappointed too, for she would fain have helped the poor creature with a broad piece of her own. But you gave your kind heart, Mistress Molly, and you may keep your gold, for the woman is gone!

THE SECOND CHRISTMAS.

"Noel, Noel, Noel we sing!"

Spring comes and goes, summer-time and autumn; waving grasses, flowers and birds, and golden corn, give place to leaden skies, and brown-forked branches, and mouldering leaves. The old apostle yews at the church door have borne the frost and snow of seven more winters; and Baby at the castle has grown into "my lady Betty;" a beautiful child, with long hair now, under the stiff lace cap.

And what of the little waif and stray who shared in that baptism on Christmas Day? Hill and moorland are snow-covered just as they were that Christmas seven years ago. The sun has risen and sends a broad red line across the grey sky, to be reflected on the surface of the frozen streams, and make the ice-bound tree-branches glisten in his dawning light. Across the moor no track of man or beast mars the unbroken surface of the snow mantle, and only down in a hollow a little smoke-wreath shows blue against the all-pervading white. A small barefooted child is gazing out open-eyed on the great white landscape—it seems to her a dream of the night—yesterday brown and bare, to-day all beautiful! Can it be for the little Child Christ that the earth has made herself so pure and white?

To-day is His birthday, it must surely be for Him, she thinks! Inside all is dim and has its every-day look; outside the air is keen, and every branch and bud seems a message from Heaven, and the child stands entranced. A robin hops near, but she never turns her head. Do the angels speak to little children when we see that far-away look in their blue eyes? A little later a small voice asks the eager question:

"Mother, may I go find the Child Jesus?"

There is a sick woman on the lowly pallet bed, and she makes answer very sadly.

"I should hardly know my way now if I could walk. I have never been to Mass for seven years—and this is Christmas Day!"

"But, mother," persists the child, "you told me last night to-day was His birthday; I must needs go and bear Him a present."

"My wee wench, my little girlie! God give me strength to walk again, and then I may take my little one to His altar; but, my dear, we must e'en bide His good time. God bless my little daughter—the Child Jesus is with us, Molly—though we may not go across the moor to find Him in His house."

"Is that His house where the white tower stands, mother?"

"Yea, my child, the same."

"What present will they give Him where the white tower stands?"

"Give Him?" repeats the woman dreamily, "sweet herbs and flowers; thou art a fair flower, child, meet for the Sacred Heart."

"Tell me about Him in His house, mother."

"Surely, child, a lamp burns before the tabernacle, a yellow lamp, all gold, my child. What is said about a sword piercing His Blessed Mother's heart? Sure a sword is in my heart this day to think we are let from Holy Mass. His will be done! I offer Him my pains, my useless limbs—*fiat voluntas Tua.*"

There is a long silence after that. A ray of morning sun streams through the opening that serves for door and window in the hut. The light falls on the child's brown curls, and makes a gold aureole of the woman's pale sweet face.

"Tell me about His birthday, mother; was it in the snow?"

The oft-repeated story is gone through once again, when footsteps draw near and there enters a grave ancient man with a beard as white as the snow outside—the child calls him St. Joseph. She has something to ask him now, but

she waits her time, a patient little maiden with serious eyes fixed upon the two faces while they talk. "Penal laws, the Queen's majesty;" what can she understand about it all? She heeds not their anxious voices, her little mind is busy with far-away thoughts about the church with the white tower, and how she may get there across the moor. When at length the old man turns from the door, she runs after him and pulls at his coat.

"Dear uncle St. Joseph, take me to see little Jesus."

"Faith, thou art a strange child."

"Take me to see Him," she insists; "I want to go to church where the white tower stands."

A shade passes over the brown withered face, and his voice is tremulous as he makes answer:

"Thou'lt not find Him there now, little Mary; I don't think the tower church holds Him there any longer."

Then he strides away, leaving her there looking after him. For a moment the child stands undecided, then she too sets out over the snow, not in the direction the old man has taken, but towards the far distant clump of trees where the white tower points to the rosy morning clouds.

"Saint Joseph's wrong this time," she says to herself, as she trots along, "for mother knows: mother has been there to see Him, and mother knows."

The snow is hard and frost bound on the paths, but little Mary knows the way, past the thick bracken of the dying year, all beautiful and silvery white, each delicate fern spray quivering like jewels that sparkle and glitter in the sun. But soon the last familiar trees are past—the belt of red Scotch firs and big King Stephen's oak; she has never gone so far before, but oh, ever such a little way off now she can see the tower rise above the trees. On she goes, no shadow of fear crossing her childish breast, her blue eyes sparkling, her cheek glowing in the frosty air. Still the path turns and twists through unfamiliar ways, still the child follows on nothing daunted.

The sun is brighter now, flooding the heavens with light; along the path a shadow is cast behind the tripping figure.

A white bodice and blue kirtle, bare little arms and legs, no cloak, no hood to cover the tossing curls—on she goes under the wintry sky, but the clouds are pink and gold, and a robin hops before and twitters a tiny song. The trees widen out now and she is on a smooth common, then she gives a little cry of joy! Yonder, straight before her, is the church with the white tower, and she runs across the snow to its iron-studded door.

She pauses on the threshold to peep in. A man is talking very loud and fast, many women and men sit in rows to listen. What can he be saying? The child peers up at him from under her tangled hair. He is in a box high above her head, and points with his finger while he talks. She can hardly summon courage to creep further in, he looks so black and grim and talks so loud. But after all, if the Holy Child is there, why need she fear?

She walks boldly in, her little feet making a pitter patter between the long slow-drawn prayers, for the people are kneeling now. Little Mary is looking—looking—turning her head about in great anxiety, forgetful of the people, forgetful even of the ugly man in black; alas, she cannot see the little lamp—there is no light here! The tears of disappointment spring to her eyes, she clasps her hands together and cries out, "He isn't here! the Child Jesus isn't here at all!" One or two people stop their loud prayers to turn disapproving looks upon the little girl, and to some hearts in that church the innocent voice comes like accusing conscience—they who, for lust of greed, have bartered the old religion of their fathers, and thrown away the priceless pearl of Faith! Someone comes hurrying down the aisle to turn her out, "a naughty child to cry in church."

Yes, turn her out, this is no place for her! she is Mary's child, and what part has she in your formal worship? He is not here. She does not see anyone coming, her small heart is swelling with sorrow as she patters back to the great door and out into the broad sunshine, her eyes filled with unshed tears, her little breast heaving with the rising sobs.

Just behind the church is a big wooden door under a

great archway. It is open now and she passes in, too sorrowful to mark where her footsteps are carrying her. An avenue of tall elms stretching naked branches overhead, and then a wide terrace slope. A beautiful garden lies spread out before her, but there are no flowers now. The fountains are still and ice-bound in their stone basins, but there are wonderful white figures that stand on the great balustrade, stretching down the terrace walk, and far up near the sky a flag unfolds bright colours to the breeze. The little maiden stands in bewilderment, which finally turns to awe, when a door opens, and a child comes out in a wonderful golden dress, all shining, and hair like gold, and she does not speak, when the radiant vision comes towards her.

"What are you doing here, little girl? Don't you know this is my garden?"

Thus addressed, little Mary hastens to explain:

"I only came to find you on your birthday, but I had no present to bring," she adds mournfully, ready to cry again.

The other child opens wide her large eyes.

"It isn't my birthday, *that* was on Saint Thomas'!"

"I thought you were the Child Jesus," says little Mary wistfully.

For all answer, she breaks into a long loud peal of mirth, and then both voices blend together; little Mary laughs too, and they both take hands.

"Will you come into my house, little girl?"

"Nay, but I must needs find the Child Jesus," was the solemn answer.

The other pointed down the terrace walk.

"He's in there!" and she led the way—a strangely-matched pair, one with bare feet peeping under her blue petticoat, the other in a festal robe all cloth of gold, her shining hair wreathed with holly berries.

There is a side door in the great house, and at the end of a long winding passage is the room that serves for a chapel. Six years ago the stately Gothic church outside was not beautiful enough for the service of that King Who is worshipped in the "beauty of holiness;" and now all

that is left to the faithful sons of the Church is this one small room. There are white flowers, Christmas roses, growing outside, and the beautiful child picks some. "They are for you," she says, and runs away. A little lamp sheds a soft light—a lamp that looks like gold or something very bright —here then is the Holy Child! A little Babe laid on straw —how poor and cold He looks, and yet He smiles as if inviting her.

"Yes, I have got a present, dear Child Jesus. I have got some flowers for you," she says softly, and standing on tiptoe holds out her Christmas roses. She wonders that He does not speak, but she will lay the flowers down upon the altar step and wait. Perhaps like Herman, the boy-saint we read of, she expects an outstretched hand to take her gift—but there is only silence in the chapel. The child is tired out with her wanderings and drowsy in the numbing cold; the little eyes grow heavy, the curly head sinks upon the rounded arm, and she falls fast asleep where the figure of the Holy Child smiles down upon her from the crib.

"Look, mother!" cries Lady Betty, "there is the strange little girl who wanted to give something to Lord Jesus on His Birthday—she told me so—and now she's gone to sleep!"

They lift her up still sleeping, and the gentle lady of the castle will have her warmed at the great wood fire in the hall. While they are chafing her poor cold limbs, she opens wide her eyes and smiles upon the strange faces round—they seem to her all wondrous beautiful! Then Lady Betty must have her taste of her own mess and Christmas cheer. It is not till twilight has deepened into darkness and night draws on apace that an old man has come to ask for a little strayed maiden, and they bring him into the castle hall. Amongst all the high revelry his eye seeks in vain for the lost treasure, until my lady herself, beckoning with her hand, leads him up the broad stairs to the chamber where the little child lies sleeping at her new friend's side; her little ladyship would have it so, and her mother did not say her nay. So little Mary sleeps with my Lady Betty for a bed-fellow.

"Nay, said the old man, "but I must needs bear her away this night."

And then he told to sympathising ears how he had returned to the moorland hut that afternoon—it was his business to go and come with provisions for the little family—and found the nestling fled, and found the parent bird helpless, weeping out her heart. A countryman had seen the child pass under the castle gateway, so thither he wended his steps, just when the moon was beginning to rise and silver-tip the mighty trees, and the old belfry tower outside the castle court.

"Nay," he said, "the child's mother, my own sister, is fit to break her heart, sore and fearful lest her little one lie buried in the snow. I would fain restore her to her mother's arms. Thank the Lord Christ—" here my lady crosses herself and the old man bends low—"that He guided our little maid's footsteps to so good a shelter, and thank you, madam, who have shown yourself a good lady to this poor wench."

So they must even let her go with him, but not till she is carefully wrapped against the cold in a great fur cloak and hood and muffler, from out of which sleepy blue eyes peep a farewell.

My Lady Betty must see her again: nothing but a promise will content her. And then when the moon is high by the white snow-light, the old man carries back his lost lamb across the moor, never awakening from her slumber in the warm folds of the great fur cloak. She is restored, blissful and rosy, to her mother's arms, and opening her dreamy eyes murmurs out in a little sleepy voice:

"Mother! I have seen the Child Jesus, and a wonderful lady in a great church in a garden, and they gave me good cheer, and, oh! such grand presents! and I slept—and then St. Joseph came and fetched me away!"

THE THIRD CHRISTMAS.

O the mint and the marigold !
O the savours manifold !
Marjoram and thyme and tansy,
Pimpernel and pink and pansy—
All within her garden growing,
Blowing,
Growing,
All a-blowing;
O, the lavender that bloomed
And the big brown bees that boomed!

MAY PROBYN.

AMONGST the flowers in the beautiful garden, a sweet tall maiden stands holding a big basket, two sunburnt hands clasped round the handle. It is summer time, and she has come to help, while they are cutting lavender. Blue sky above, and round about her on every side a luxury of blossoms and sweet-smelling herbs, while she, like another flower, holds up her green kirtle from the dewy grass. My lady herself is there, her beautiful white arms plunged amongst the lavender, her satin gown drawn back under bib and apron, with the great scissors jangling at her side. Her little ladyship follows after her mother, a tall maiden now, but quaint and demure, taking the fresh cut lavender with careful hands to place in Mary's basket.

A pretty picture ! and so my lord thinks as he comes down the terrace walk, to where the three are standing. Happy days for little Mary ; she has come to the castle to be waiting-maid to my Lady Betty. The moor hut is too far off for much visiting, but her ladyship rode there once, and that was on St. John Baptist's day, before all their troubles began. As for Mistress Molly, the sweet young madam who had stood sponsor for the widow's child, she has not since been seen at the castle, having gone across seas with her father and brother to escape the penalties inflicted on all good men for their religion. By the law, they must attend the new worship

or pay a heavy fine, and hitherto they at the castle have escaped; the Earl, by reason of his great position, holds his head high, not knowing his turn will come.

As the children grow into womanhood, Lady Betty is accounted one of the beauties of the Court, and has many suitors, but when the family move away to London, "Molly" (as they call her) is left behind, for her mother is ailing, and her uncle comes to fetch her away. Then she will while away the sick woman's weary hours with tales of the noble ladies, her patrons, and all the grand hospitality shown up at the castle; how my lady would prepare with her own hands the potions and healing herbs for the sick poor who crowded to her gate, and how on feast days, Lady Betty had treats, in which Molly shared in best bib and gown,—cowslip wine and short cakes in the arbour at the end of the pleasaunce.

Molly has no suitors, but I think during those long summer days, when she watches the white-flecked sky and great purple sunsets, and wanders among the pink heath bells, the yellow broom and golden gorse all in bloom, or sits under the red firs, listening to the never-ending whispering of the breeze in the branches, her heart grows very near to God, the Author of all this wonderful world. And how God helps those who put their trust in Him, is made very evident to her later on, when her mother grows so sick, and can only sob and cry for a priest, and none to be found far or near.

The family at the castle was away in London, but would be home for Christmas. Molly's mother lies dying. No leech can do her any good. "My last hour," she gasps, "is come. Pray for me, Molly, child. Jesus mercy, Mary help—if God's minister could come! but His Holy Will be done."

Molly watches the sun dip down upon the moor, with a feeling akin to despair clinging round her young heart. The mother seems asleep, and the girl stands looking out at the last fading ray that glimmers like a yellow flash along the watery horizon, and the stealthy white mist comes creeping up amongst the furze bushes, and the thin shivering trunks of the silver birch.

An hour later and the moor is wrapped in a white impenetrable mist. Molly cowers down wrapped in a sheepskin amongst the smoke of the peat fire. Then she starts; there! there is surely a sound of horses' feet? she dare not look out into the darkness of the open door; what if it is a wraith, a goblin horseman! All the ghastly stories she has ever heard crowd to Molly's mind, and she shivers as she fancies she hears the jingling of a horse's bit, and the sound of hoofs on the wet miry ground.

And if the girl could have seen, through the vapoury air, two horsemen were approaching, making their cautious way towards the dull red light of her peat fire, and one of them carries a lady on a pillion, wrapped round and hooded against the treacherous damp.

"I made sure it was only one o' them devilish will-o'-the-wisps," says one man. "Saint Raphael's been a good master to us after all!"

"What, had thy faith cooled in danger?" says the other, in a tone of reproof. "Why, my man, Almighty God has His hands above us on the road, and 'twere ill to distrust His good Angel's guidance."

The lady spoke now.

"If an they be honest folk, they will tell us the way out of this wild country; it were best that one should ask. Not so! not you, dear brother! Let Humphrey dismount and get speech of them." She lowers her voice, speaking anxiously.

"By your leave, Mistress Molly," says the serving man, "we will bide here the night; it's ill work going out across these dangerous bogs in a fog such as the devil himself couldn't penetrate, and look you, the beasts be spent."

"It mislikes me to tarry here; will it be safe?" She appeals to the old servant, when the other interrupts:

"I'll dare swear they be honest folk and too dunder-headed to make any such discovery as we fear, sweet mistress Molly; so go before, good Humphrey,—we bide here."

Then it is, that Molly, rising to her feet at the sound of

voices, finds herself face to face with a man in leathern jerkin, with sword and pistols at his belt.

"Good Lord!" she utters a little cry. "We are poor folk, master, and you will find nothing here! Shelter? My mother lies at the point of death. I pray you go elsewhere!"

Then when she hears that it is no highwayman, but a poor lady benighted with her servingmen, she bids them welcome, though it is with a little tremor in her voice she repeats, "My mother is mortally sick, and we have but this one poor place; our Lord send that ye may not kill her outright, it is fearsome and lonely for two poor women to admit strange folk!"

But when they come in, and she sees a lady so gentle-looking and of soft speech, her fears are allayed, and she hastens to take off their damp cloaks, and make seats of the sheepskins round the fire. There is no chimney; the smoke escapes by the door and a hole in the roof, and the lady wonders at the maiden amidst such poverty, yet dressed with all decency and taste.

"Thou seemest to be of gentle nurture, what may thy name be, little one?"

"Only Mary, but I am Molly to some." She busies herself to make ready a great basin of porridge, the only food she can produce, with a small piece of black bread for each, and she makes her apologies for the scanty fare.

"We are bound for Castle Cantor," says the lady. "Dost thou know which way it lies?"

"Yea, that do I; the noble ladies are my good patrons; but I think they are not come home. And O madam," she goes on, meeting Mistress Molly's sympathizing gaze, "my mother lies adying, and every day she crieth out for the priest like one distraught, and then she saith the Lord hath heard her prayer, and that the priest will be with her, though I know full well there is none forthcoming!"

"She is a bold woman who dares talk of a Catholic priest when, did he come, the penalty of the law would be upon her. It is death to harbour a priest."

It is one of the two serving-men who speaks, and the girl's pale face flushes.

"Since when has it been law in England to deprive the sheep of the shepherd?" she cries out.

"The law is framed by the Queen's ministers; it is never the will of the people!"

"My girl, for only one of those bold words I might hand you over to the Justice."

Mistress Molly holds up a warning finger to the speaker.

"And who are you?" says the girl with the utmost scorn, while her dark curls toss back with the indignant shake of her head. "Cravens! out upon you—you of the Government-men—you obey the apostate Queen—I *will* say it, she *is* apostate! She has left the Faith of her fathers!"

No Lady Betty could have spoken more vehemently than did this simple waiting-maid! And this was the spirit of every maid and matron, stalwart yeoman and honest country-man, throughout the kingdom, when the altars they had loved and reverenced in youth and old age were overthrown, the churches where their Catholic fathers had worshipped, desecrated, and their priests, the ministers of the old Religion, driven into exile. There are those who would fain have us believe that the England of those days welcomed the Protestant religion, that the poor simple country people accepted readily the new doctrines framed for them by Parliament, and to which the clergy made "a most vigorous but fruitless opposition!" Have they forgotten the insurrections all over the country, during which time thousands laid down their lives rather than conform to the new religion?

Molly's bold speech is received in silence, only the serving-man who first spoke seems much moved and says "Amen," which surprises the girl not a little: and they all look so benevolently upon her, she is no longer afraid of violence.

"What would ye do to a poor girl and a dying woman?" she asks, a ring of scorn in her young voice, while her eyes flash. Her mother's feeble tones break in:

"Ah, have a care! do not harm her—do not hurt my child!"

The lady rises hastily and draws nearer to the bed.

"Nay, good wife," she says gently, "fear not: we will do no harm to the maid, rather protect her."

The dim light falls on the lady's sweet fair face—there are worn, anxious marks about it now, but the poor woman knows it again—and she takes the slim white hand held out to her while her tears rain upon it. Then she gives a kind of cry.

"Dear Lord! after all these years! I that thought never to see you more—good lady, you are the very same! The same kind madam—though you were but a bit of a girl then. The same who stood gossip to my babe in the tower church, eighteen years ago come Christ's Mass!"

"Nay, good mother, do not weep," says Mistress Molly, with a world of tenderness in her voice. "God has sent me to befriend the same poor babe—a woman grown, and she shall have meat and house-warm with me as long as I have roof to shelter me, so do not weep!"

The other Molly comes and kneels by her mother's bed, and there she hears the story of her baptism, and the thick fog comes rolling up, sheltering them from the outer world. And oh, wondrous joyful intelligence! Mistress Molly tells them that their prayers are indeed answered, for one of God's priests is with them, and will give all the ministry that Holy Church holds out to her children in the hour of death.

Then the moonlight slants quivering in, the mists have cleared away, and the gentle breeze comes rustling round amongst the trees, and to those kneeling there it seems an omen of the darkness past and light to come. The last absolution is given, and God's pardon solemnly sealed by Holy Viaticum, just as the dawn is breaking and the poor earth-worn spirit goes to its rest. Molly's mother is dead.

And did the Lord care for the orphan child?

The sweet lady, Mistress Molly, who loves the girl already,

takes Mary away with her to the castle, and a few weeks later, the pale, lonely child has taken up her abode in Mistress Molly's chamber. And from Lady Betty she learns that the good Father is Mistress Molly's own brother, come over seas with her from foreign parts to do Christ's work in His vineyard, and meet his fate, torture or martyrdom, which ever may befall. Mary has a great fear at her heart that they will come and arrest him at his cousin's castle and take him away to prison. Lady Betty, always so light-hearted, seems to have none of these fears.

"My poor Molly," she says, "without thee and the light from thy fire, my cousin would have lost his life in a bog. Don't be too set up, but 'tis Gospel truth, I tell thee!"

"Nay, madam, Our Lady's prayers sent the priest to mother's dying bed," Mary answers gravely, and Lady Betty goes away singing some gay snatch: "He's all safe now, I trow they will not dare set their butchers' feet in my father's castle!"

But Mary is to do a greater service yet, and repay that gentle benefactress who in her young days did a lowly deed for Christ's love. He rewarded her a hundredfold.

It is Christmas Eve. Slow rain-drops dripping from tree and roof, a desolate mist shrouding the land as if to hide its wintry nakedness. Molly, the waiting-maid, sits in her lady's chamber, looking out from the steep turret window.

What a strange Christmas Eve! No sights or sounds of jollity, of the feast that is to follow a fast; dreary silence has fallen on all the household; dismay on every face; my lord pale and mournful; my lady wrings her hands. What can it be? Whisper the word with its dreadful sound, "the pursuivants are coming!" This forenoon a warning was sent to my lord that his house would be searched. He is suspected of harbouring a "Massing-priest" for the approaching Christmas festival, and consternation reigns where before all was peace. Amongst all the faces gathered there, Mistress Molly's is the whitest.

"Guy," she says; "dear brother," and she seems like one

distraught with grief, "if they should take you, I am undone, I have no more to live for!"

"Tush, sister," he answers, and the quick blood mounts to his forehead, "we must be made of sterner stuff, or how shall we ever give back the faith to the poor robbed children of the Church? Cheer up, dear heart; God will provide."

Then there is hurrying to and fro, the rush of hasty feet, and the good Father lies in one of the hiding-places of which there are many at Castle Cantor. Mary is kneeling in the turret chamber, when there is loud knocking at the great gate; the thundering blows come up even where she is, and make her heart stand still with fear. She is offering petitions that God in His mercy may ward off this terrible danger, and she prays those blessed ones who have gained the heavenly courts to add their supplications, and can we doubt that the Lord, Who listens to the just man's prayer, will refuse the combined petition of saints in heaven and His child on earth?

The door opens quickly, and Mistress Molly flies in, dragging my lady with her, and closes the door carefully behind her.

"We are undone, the hiding-places are all known to them! This is a traitor's handiwork," cries her ladyship, clasping distracted hands together. "Oh, sweet cousin, what shall we do?"

But Mistress Molly does not answer; she stands pale and immovable like one paralysed. "Teach me to say, Thy will be done," she murmurs between her set white lips. While they are still scarcely conscious of her presence, the little maid of a sudden kneels down before them. "If I may make so bold, madam,—your ladyship,—I would ask leave to conduct the reverend Father to our hut upon the moor: it is a poor place, but oh, it is safe, it is safe! and even the country folk scarce know where it lies—in the dark and fog, none would follow."

She has not finished speaking before one of her hearers has left the room. The sound of loud voices and revelry rises

from the great hall; there is a pause in the search, and the men are drinking; now and again the snatch of a song is followed by a roar of laughter.

"Child, are you sure?—can you do this?" my lady asks severely, in her great agony of mind; "you will not betray a sacred trust?"

"On my life, madam! I would shed every drop of blood in my body first!"

My lady remembered those words afterwards, and the look in the girl's eyes that seemed like a sacred fire.

Another five minutes and Molly, carefully cloaked and hooded, has left the castle by a postern door, and with her a tall erect figure, whose long strides keep up easily with her running footsteps. O God's good angel go with them! How thick the fog is, and she dare not light the lanthorn she carries with her, but her eyes strain painfully through the gloom. She makes her way below the terraces and along the church path, across the village road and over the grass. Thank God! the common is passed, and they are out on the moor.

The priest does not speak; perhaps, thinks Molly, he is praying, and presently when she stops to light the lanthorn from a tinder in her pocket, he kneels down upon the withered bracken. They are out of sight of the castle, and the wavering lanthorn flame may be taken for one of those will-o'-the-wisps, that deceive unwary travellers. "O Lord," she hears him pray, "spare Thy servant, spare me yet to do Thy work and save this people from destruction."

In silence they go on, Molly first, turning the dim light on oak bark and red Scotch fir, each thin clump as it comes marking their way onwards until at last a faint red light shows like a glow-worm in the dark. "He is there! Uncle Saint Joseph," cries the girl, speaking for the first time; "he is there," and she runs forward to the hut.

Up at the castle all is quiet now; the pursuivants, baffled and disappointed of their prey, have ridden off for another carouse at the village inn. My Lord has friends at court, and they dare not outstay their mission, but they leave

traces behind—tapestry torn from the walls, broken panels, and chests and cupboards rifled.

All night Mistress Molly is praying, and my Lady keeps her company. The morning star peeps out, it is Christmas Day, and with it comes a messenger that the good Father is safe. Oh what a Christmas morning! the sun rises in the soft blue-grey sky, and as his beams roll back the mists, it all seems a horrible dream, too strange to be true. Just above the little hut is a wide open space, pink with heather in the summer-time and shut in by tall green ferns, all bare now, with the brown mouldering bracken lying around.

Hither comes Mistress Molly, pale and trembling still, and my Lady with her, and a few of her household. Christ's Mass out on the bleak moor! with a smooth knoll of grass for altar, on which the priest has placed the consecrated stone, and my Lord serves the Mass. A few of the faithful villagers are there, and scouts are on the alert to give timely notice of a foe.

The solemn *Agnus Dei* is said. The priest holds up the consecrated Host. "Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him Who taketh away the sins of the world." Then comes three times reiterated, "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; say but the word and my soul shall be healed." The sacred Body of the Lord is received upon the lips and in the hearts of the faithful gathered there. The Holy Child of Bethlehem, Jesus born of Mary, comes to still each fearful soul, and imparts strength for the coming struggle.

So soon? Is martyrdom even now at hand? The young priest turns. A man comes hurrying, panting, breathless, he can only point to where three horsemen are tearing down upon them! "Fly, fly!" Each one takes up the cry, and like melting snow the people vanish, scattering right and left to the bushes and scanty clump of trees around the hut. The sun glances out upon the affrighted flying people, and catches the golden cross upon the priest's vestment, where he stands unmoved before the rustic altar—a pistol is pointed! there comes a loud report,

followed by a scream. They are kneeling round a prostrate figure upon the ground, and that agonizing shriek came from Mistress Molly. Pale and cold, with the life-blood ebbing, is it the priest who lies there upon the sod?

"Faithful unto death," let it be said of her—a woman's heart receiving the death-wound intended for God's priest; she threw herself between him and the fatal bullet—she dies for the shepherd of the flock. In vain do they kneel and chafe the cold hands and look for some sign of life. He is saved, his martyr-crown deferred, the soldiers are beaten back, there is time to escape, but Mary will not wake again.

Mistress Molly weeps; was it too great a price to pay for that dear brother's life?

Mary, little Mary, you have paid the debt now! "Faithful unto death," you have gone to meet the Child Jesus Whom you yearned for on earth; you have seen the King in His Beauty, and the last Christmas Day has begun for you with "Gloria in excelsis," evermore!

THE O'BRIENS' CHRISTMAS.

By Clara Mulholland.

About half a mile from the racecourse on the Epsom Downs, in a little hollow at the foot of the hill, are two neat-looking, well-built red-brick cottages. They are the property of a wealthy farmer named Dobson, and are tenanted by labourers who work upon his farm.

In the first of these houses lives a man called Tim O'Brien, with his young wife and six small children—Patsy, Maura, Bridget, Ebba, Kevin, and the baby, aged four months, who have all faces as purely Irish in feature and expression as if they had been born in Kerry, instead of in the county of Surrey.

Their father and mother are hardworking and industrious; but the wages of a labourer are not high, and to keep six little bodies warmly clad, and six little mouths well filled on nineteen shillings a week, is a difficult task enough. But Mrs. O'Brien has a cheerful heart; and after the very hard times that she had been accustomed to during her own childhood in Ireland, she considered herself fortunate in being able to keep her children so free from want and discomfort.

"For sure," she would say to her next-door neighbour, "it's little ye know about poverty over here. Why, the poorest of ye is rich compared to the creatures over in Kerry beyant, who are contint and happy if they can pay the bit of rint an' stick to their patch of land. Sure, they're used to being hungry over there, God help thim."

Still, when Patsy gets a situation as helper in the garden

at York Park, and receives six shillings a week, which he runs to place at his mother's disposal, the good woman is vastly pleased, and thinks gladly of all the little luxuries this will provide for the family.

The following winter a great trouble fell upon the O'Briens. Their father, after a long day's work in a steady downpour of rain, caught cold, and for several weeks lay upon his bed, very ill indeed. For two long weary months he was confined to the house, and the loss of his wages and the expense of his illness brought the little family to the verge of starvation.

"We're not so bad as many in Ireland yet," Mrs. O'Brien would say, with a brave attempt at a smile, "for sure we have had no rint to pay all this time. And, plaze God, Tim'll be at work after Christmas."

And the good woman was right. On Christmas Eve Tim said he felt as strong as ever, and that Dobson would allow him to return to his work the following week.

"It's been a hard time for you, Nora, darlin'," he said sadly—"hard for you an' the children; an' I'm grieved to think they'll have nothin' a bit nice for dinner to-morrow—an it Christmas Day."

"They won't complain, Tim, nor will I. Sure, to see you well and able to work is better nor fifty good dinners. Glory be to God, sure there's nothin' so valuable as health."

"True for ye, alanna. But what's come to the children? Look at them runnin' down the road. They're terrible excited."

Mrs. O'Brien went to the door, and in a moment the five little ones, with Patsy at their head, tumbled pell-mell up the garden path, their cheeks glowing, their eyes sparkling.

"Steady, Bridget. Maura, you'll let Kevin fall. Patsy, asthore, take care of Ebba," cried the mother. "Sure, it's well the baby's safe in her cradle. But what's the matter me darlins?"

"We've got such a treat for you and father, and all," laughed Patsy, laying a parcel he was carrying down upon

the kitchen table. "See, mammy, isn't it fine?" And pulling away a sheet of newspaper, he uncovered a large succulent leg of mutton.

Mrs. O'Brien, her husband, and children crowded round and looked at it in astonishment.

"Ha, ha, mammy! Isn't master good? He got two whole sheep and cut them up, and gave a piece to every man and boy about the place."

"God bless him," she answered, with tears in her eyes. "God bless him and his, and keep them prosperous."

Next morning the O'Briens were early astir, and as soon as breakfast was over the father and mother took Patsy and Bridget by the hand, and set out to walk across the Downs to the chapel, which was some three miles away.

Maura was left behind, to look after the baby and the other little ones. They could not all leave the house at once, so they took it in turns to go to Mass and stay at home.

At last the little party is seen returning, and as they enter, Maura dances joyfully up and down the room. "There is such a good fire, mammy," she cries. "And see, here are five eggs, that my dear old hen has laid. I've saved them all for to-day. And here is flour, and milk that we bought yesterday with money Patsy got for holdin' a gentleman's horse at the Park."

"Flour and eggs and milk," said Mrs. O'Brien, laughing; "What a feast! I'll make some pancakes, asthore. An' when our leg of mutton is cooked, we'll have the best Christmas dinner we've had for many a year."

"There's nothin' better than hot pancakes," cried Patsy. "But don't be long, mother, for the walk across the Downs has given us all an appetite Eh, father?"

So the cloth was laid, and as soon as the leg of mutton was thoroughly well done, Mrs. O'Brien placed it on the table, and the little family sat down to enjoy it with thankful hearts.

"I declare, mammy, it's snowin' hard an' fast," cried Patsy, as, having finished his dinner, he went over to the window. "Isn't it lucky we got into Mass and back before that came on?"

"Indeed it is. For sure that wind is cold and cuttin'. God help anyone that's out in such a snowstorm."

"O, it's lovely!" shouted Kevin. "Look at the fluffy white things curling about, Ebba. Won't we have fun makin' snowballs to-morrow?"

"It's cold," said Ebba, decidedly. "I don't like snow. It makes me shiver;" and she nestled closer to her father, who sat nursing baby by the fire.

"It'll be a splendid day to make pancakes," cried Maura, as she helped her mother to put away the dinner things. "I am longing to be at them, mammy. When shall we begin?"

"In a couple of hours, darlin'. But sure it'll be a long time afore you're hungry again, after such a dinner. Why, I declare, there's scarcely a bit of mutton left. Look, Tim, didn't we eat with a will?"

"Seven hungry people will soon make a leg of mutton look silly," he answered, laughing. "But be quick, Nora, and sit down, for Patsy's going to read us a bit out of a little book he got from Father Tom, beyant, telling the story of our Lord's birth and life."

"I'm comin', Tim. An' sure that same'll be a rare treat," she replied, and in a few moments tidied up the kitchen. She and Maura took their seats beside the fire.

The boy opened his book and began to read.

The twilight came on, and very soon the winter's day drew to a close, and when Patsy's sharp eyes could no longer distinguish the words upon the page, Maura stole her hand into her mother's, whispering:

"Now, mammy, let's make the pancakes."

"Yes, darlin'," she answered, her eyes fixed dreamily upon the fire. "Yes, presently. How beautiful that is, Tim. But how sad to think of our Blessed Lord an' His Holy Mother out in the cold—may be in cold like it is to-night on the Downs. What a shame none o' those people would take them in."

"They were Jews!" exclaimed Patsy, contemptuously; "hard, cruel Jews."

"Well," said Tim, sadly, "it's a story that's bein' repeated often in our own times by Christians. An' there's many an

excuse to be offered—for sure who would take in wanderin' people they didn't know? An' remember, no one knew the Blessed Virgin nor St. Joseph."

"No matter," cried the kind-hearted woman, warmly, "they ought to have let them in. I'd never refuse the poorest crature a bed on such a night, if I'd one to spare."

"Well, well, it's hard to say what we'd have done. But now what about those pancakes? The children'll soon be wantin' their tea."

"Not to mention the father," she replied, laughing. "Oh, Tim, Tim, ye always had a sweet tooth."

"So I have. An' sure there's nothin' I like better nor a pancake. So now, *cushla machree*, set to work, if ye plaze."

"I'll not be long." And springing to her feet, Mrs. O'Brien tied a large apron over her Sunday gown, and gathering flour, milk, sugar, eggs, and butter around her, was about to begin her work, when a loud knock at the outer door startled her, and she dropped the spoon she held upon the floor.

"God save us, what's that? Patsy, go and see who's there."

Patsy opened the door, and the wind rushed into the house, carrying with it a quantity of snow, and blowing everything about in wild disorder.

"Be quick, Patsy. Shut the door at once," cried his father. "If it's anyone with a message, let him stand inside!"

Patsy came into the kitchen, a look of annoyance on his face.

"Well, what is it?"

"Mammy, it's some tramps—a poor old man, a young woman and a baby."

His mother started. The colour left her cheek.

"Where are they? You did not shut them out, I hope?"

"No. They are there!"

"Bring them in. The fire is warm."

Patsy looked at her appealingly. Why should these strangers come in? Why should they occupy the family seats round the fire?

His mother saw what was passing in his mind.

"Remember the Jews," she whispered. "You would not act like them?"

"No," he sighed, "but I wish they had stayed away;" and going to the door, he told the poor wanderers to come in and warm themselves.

Shaking their snow-covered garments, and rubbing their feet upon the floor, the strangers followed the boy into the room.

"God bless you for your kindness," said the man, who was old and feeble. "It's a terrible night, and if you had not taken us in, we'd surely have died on the road. We'd never have reached Epsom alive. Peggy and the child are nearly exhausted. She from grief, poor soul, as well as cold an' hunger, for her husband's dead only three weeks to-day."

"God be merciful to him," cried Mrs. O'Brien, reverently. "An' sure it's no wonder, you'd be both cold and hungry. It's dreadful weather to be out on the tramp. She's faint, poor creature. Tim, put on the milk there, an' warm it. That will be the best thing for mother and child." And taking the baby from the woman's arms, she removed its wet clothes, and dressed it in garments belonging to her own little one.

As their father took the milk and poured it into the saucepan, according to his wife's directions, the five small O'Briens grew very red; their eyes filled with tears, and gazing at him they cried in tones of anguish:

"Pancakes without milk! O father, what shall we do?"

"Ask your mother," he said. "But remember, you must be good, and do what she tells you."

"It's horrible," cried Patsy. "I was just longing for a pancake."

"It's too bad," muttered Maura, and she stamped her little foot. "They have no right to our milk."

"It's too, too unkind," sobbed Kevin and Ebba and Bridget in a chorus. "We wish they had stayed away."

"And now you must eat an egg and some bread," they heard the mother say, as the half-starved creatures revived

under the influence of the hot milk. "There's nothing like a fresh egg; an' sure it's real lucky we have these in the house, for——" Then, catching sight of the five unhappy, disappointed faces, she paused, and sitting down upon a chair at the far end of the kitchen, she drew the children round her knee.

"Darlins," she whispered in a voice full of tender compassion, "you are sorry, I see, an' even a bit angry at losin' yer pancakes."

The children bowed their heads, and their tears began to flow.

"But supposin' it was our holy Mother, St. Joseph, and our dear Lord Himself that came into us this evenin', hungry an' cold, what would you do for them?"

"Give them all we had," said Patsy and Maura in a breath.

"Well, then, let us do the same for these poor people whom our Lord loves. For His sake, for the love of Him, let us give them what we can. We are not hungry—they are. An' sure what's a pancake after all? But still the eggs are yours. What will you do?"

For a moment no one answered; then suddenly Maura flung her arms round her mother's neck. "Give the eggs, an' all to the poor old man an' his daughter, mammy."

"Yes," said Patsy, slowly, "they want them badly—we don't."

"So they do—so they do," lisped the three little ones. "Pancakes would be nice; but the poor woman looks very hungry. We don't mind."

"God bless you!" Mrs. O'Brien drew each curly head upon her breast, kissing the tear-stained faces tenderly. "This is a happy Christmas for us all, for it has shown me how good are your little hearts, and has taught you to make acts of self-denial."

After this, the children hovered round their visitors, pressing them to eat their eggs and drink their milk. Maura nursed the baby; and at night gladly squeezed in with Bridget and Ebba in order that the tired strangers might sleep in her bed. The old man had a shake-down by the kitchen fire, Patsy and Kevin giving up one of their blankets to keep him warm.

The next morning the strangers partook of the O'Briens' frugal breakfast, and when Patsy went off to his work, they bade them all an affectionate farewell, and trudged away down the road to Epsom.

Five years have passed over in quick succession, and during that time everything has gone well with our friends in the red-brick cottage. Tim has kept strong, and is one of the best and most regular labourers upon the farm. Patsy is still in the service of the master of York Park, and has great hopes of one day being gardener in the beautiful old grounds where he works. And Maura has grown tall, but has not yet left her mother's side, and helps to wash the baby, and keeps the cottage neat. Her ambition is to become a dressmaker, and her mother is anxious to help her if she can. But money is not plentiful, and to send her to London to learn her trade, would cost more than she can ever hope to be able to gather together.

On Christmas Eve, Mrs. O'Brien sat by the fire, mending her husband's socks, whilst Maura, Bridget, Kevin, and Ebba dusted the kitchen and stuck up branches of holly and misletoe behind the prints upon the walls and on the chimney-piece

"It's goin' to be a cold winter, mammy," said Kevin, holding out a piece of holly; "I never saw such a year for berries—red, red berries."

"Maybe so, dear; but I never remember a winter so bad nor so cold as that one five years ago, when those poor people came in the snow, and we gave them shelter."

"No," replied Maura. "I wonder what became of them?"

"God knows. Maybe they died of want, or maybe they're still beggin' through the streets of London. But see, there's the postman. Kevin, asthore, run out an' see what he's got."

Kevin dashed down to the garden gate, and came back leaping and shouting, and holding a large blue envelope high above his head.

"A letter for Mrs. O'Brien. And I declare, it hasn't got the Queen's head on the stamp, but a man's, mammy. What does that mean?"

"It's from America," she answered, turning it over curiously. "Now, who can it be from?"

"Open it," said Kevin, laughing. "Staring at the envelope will never tell you what's inside."

"True for you. But it has me fairly puzzled."

Then, with trembling fingers, she broke the seal, and surrounded by five wondering children, she began to read. Her eyes filled with tears as they fell upon the signature, and, suddenly dropping the paper, she clasped Maura to her breast.

"Darlin'," she cried, "let's thank God from the bottom of our hearts, for here's money that'll help us, an' sure you can go to London an' learn to be a fine dressmaker when ye plaze. O it's splendid! The likes never was heard of before."

"Money!" Maura gasped. "O, mammy, has a fairy godmother made us rich?"

"No, darlin'; but that poor soul we helped—the creature you gave up your pancakes for. She has a grateful heart. The old man and that wee baby are dead, but she is doing well. So she sends us a two hundred dollar bill to buy Christmas boxes for us all."

So when Tim and Patsy returned from their work, they found the little household wild with excitement and delight. Such a sum of money was a fortune to them; and they felt as though they could never be poor any more.

And from that day they prospered. Maura got on well as a dressmaker; Bridget as a housemaid; and Patsy got his heart's desire, and became a gardener; whilst the little ones did well in their turns, growing up to be good and industrious, a credit to their father and mother.

Let those who are well-off and comfortable, though they may not be able to copy in every detail the good example of the O'Briens, remember the poor, and stretch out a helping hand to those who may be as cold and hungry as the old man and his half-starved daughter, when they craved admission at the red-brick cottage. Let them help them for the love of Jesus, and their reward will be great.

St. Gregory the Great.

(540—604.)

BY THE REV. A. J. SAXTON.

"None should take upon him to rule who first hath not learned to obey; nor command that obedience to his subjects, which before he hath not given to his own superiors." (St. Gregory's *Dialogues* I., i., old English translation.)

Early Years.

A STRANGE greeting is this, it would seem, which his people have prepared for the ears of their Pontiff Benedict I., as he proceeds through the streets of his still faithful Rome to one of its Basilicas. "Holy Father," they cry as they gather round him, "Holy Father, you have undone Rome; you have displeased St. Peter." Willing, as the first Pope had been (Acts xi. 3, 4.) to justify himself even before his subjects, "In what have I offended, my children?" he enquires. "Apostolic Father," the crowd repeat, "you have undone us, you have sent away Gregory from our city."

This representation of his people's distress fully determined their Bishop, already inclined to revoke an act which, against his inclination, he had been prevailed upon to do by the urgent and tearful entreaties of the holy monk himself. Thus while Gregory was making all haste to the seaboard, on his way, as he joyfully fancied, to convert the Saxons in Britain, the necessary Papal letter for his recall was being drawn up; eager hands were waiting to grasp it, and by the strong lines of its authority bind the runaway, for so they conceived him,

and lead him back to his own city and its sovereign call upon his charity and pastoral zeal.

He was already advanced three days on his journey when the unwelcome messengers overtook him. The fierce heat had driven him and his religious companions from the dusty, baking highway, to seek the cool freshness of a meadow, and the holy man was reading, when a presentiment came upon him that their further advance was about to be prevented. Still it was not too late. He rose at once, and expressed his wish to push forward without further delay. But even as the missioners were mounting, the Pope's messengers drew near, and Gregory read in their looks that his fears for his poor Angles were too true; he must give up his project, Benedict wrote, and return to Rome at once.

Let us join ourselves now to the homeward-bound party, and try to learn from his companions the history of the humble Gregory's early years, and the occasion of this attempted visit to our forefathers, whom the Bishops of Gaul had not thought fit to instruct. We shall be told that he comes of an ancient senatorial stock, inferior in rank to few of Rome's proudest, and ennobling its patrician blood before God by a rare virtue; that among his ancestors he counts a holy Pontiff, St. Felix III., and two saintly virgins, Tharsilla and Æmiliana, sisters to Gordianus, his late father, among his living relatives. We shall hear too of a story whispered among their friends, how the holy Monk St. Benedict, on his last visit to Rome, was entertained by Gordianus and his noble spouse, Silvia,—the days of whose widowhood are being spent in holy exercises of prayer and charity on the Aventine Hill,—and how he told the matron that her first-born son should rise to greatness among the foremost of God's servants—a forecast which, it is thought, Gregory is by no means likely to falsify. His steady application of powers much above the common, has gained him the repute of being second to none in the chief branches of the learning of his day, and his abandonment of inherited splendour, his retirement from high offices held in the city with ever-growing renown,

his foundation and ample endowment of six monasteries in Sicily, and the conversion of his own mansion on the Cœlian Hill into a seventh, some twelve months ago, in which he soon after made his religious profession,—all this gives fair promise of no ordinary holiness. Deploring as he does to his own intimate friends, the tardiness of his complete conversion to God, and accusing himself of former lukewarmness in trying to combine the perfect ways of contemplation with every outward appearance of a worldly life, it is not surprising that on his once granting his heart its best desires, he speedily overtook and soon outstripped many brethren of long standing and acknowledged proficiency in virtue, and quickly gained the reputation of being a very spiritual man, and one far advanced in the inner life. That he should so soon leave the place of his choice may at first sight give rise to no small marvel.

But not many weeks ago, we are told, while passing through the forum or market-place, he saw, among other things, some boys set for sale, their bodies white, their countenances beautiful, and their hair very fine. He asked from what country or nation they were brought, and was answered they were called Angles. "Right," said he, "Angles or Angels, for they have an angelic face, and it becomes such to be co-heirs with the Angels in heaven. . . And the men of their province *Deiri?* Truly are they *de ira* (from wrath) withdrawn from wrath and called to the mercy of Christ. How is the king of that province called?"—"Ælla"—"Alleluia," repeated he, "the praise of God the Creator must be sung in those parts." [Abridged from St. Bede's *Eccles. History of the English Nation*, Book ii., Cap. i.; Dr. Giles' ed., vol. ii., p. 169.]

His Monastic Life and Diaconate. (575-579.)

Upon his return, St. Gregory, after throwing himself in humble submission at the Pope's feet, retired to his monastery on the Cœlian Hill. Little need be said of his life there. Frequent prayer and praise of God; contemplation of heavenly truths, study of the Sacred

Scriptures and of the writings of God's enlightened servants; labours in field and cell and writing-room by which succeeding generations have benefited, labours lightened by recreation spent in discussing the lives of God's heroes and the joys they inherit; a round of poverty, and penance and self-denial, which begets a peace beyond all understanding of worldlings:—such is every true monk's history. We must dwell awhile, however, upon one episode in that of Gregory. By untiring application, multiplied fasts, and lengthened vigils, he had taxed his vital powers beyond what many would style due prudence. A severe prostration and repeated illnesses resulted, "in which," he says, "a certain monk, Justus by name, who was well versed in the medical art, used to attend me." Fasting became no longer possible, or rather, to speak more truly, a rapid succession of fainting-fits made constant and generous support absolutely necessary. Men now-a-days look far less eagerly for indults and dispensations than Gregory longed to mortify his appetite. His inability to do so was more painful to him than its cause, for the most solemn fast of all Lent was drawing on, Holy Saturday, when, he reflected, all persons fast, even young boys. Among the brethren was one whose holy conversation he especially enjoyed, and whom all esteemed a saint, Eleutherius. He had given up the rule of St. Mark's monastery, near Spoleto, to live and die as a simple monk in St. Andrew's. Gregory now quietly stole with him into the chapel and commended his desires to the holy old man's prayers. Eleutherius, with tearful supplication, besought Almighty God for his afflicted brother, who thereupon regained his health so far as to perform his duties on Holy Saturday, fasting, and "on coming to eventide," he afterwards told one of his deacons, "I found myself so strong, that if I had wished I could have prolonged my fast for another day." (*Dialogues* III., 33.)

He was left in his dear solitude, which each day afforded fresh delights to one so eager in their pursuit, until some months after Pope Benedict's death, to

whom Pelagius II. succeeded in 577. This Pontiff compelled Gregory, by obedience, to take upon himself the sacred order of Deacon and the dignity of Cardinal, and employed him as secretary.

579-584. Gregory Papal Legate and Abbot.

The temporal necessities of the Holy See now opened out for our Saint a new field of usefulness. In the early part of the late pontificate, the Lombard hordes had swarmed down upon Italy from northern Germany. Pagans and idolaters some, others heretics, and the bitterer enemies, hence, of the truth—they soon, by an insatiable greed, a relentless cruelty, a brutish wastefulness of human life, and a satanic hatred of all that bore the name of sacred, proved themselves a scourge scarcely less severe than any of the ten persecutions. They were bidding fair to depopulate Italy, when in 579, Pelagius, unable any longer to bear the sight of his flock thus harrassed by savage and inhuman oppressors, resolved upon rousing the Emperor Tiberius to do something for the protection of the loveliest part of the empire. Gregory was chosen for the errand, and in the capacity of Papal Legate to the Emperor he set out for Constantinople attended by a chosen body of monks. During the journey as well as in the imperial city they led the life of mortification and holiness which they had practised in their monastery. Their mission, although received with due honour and respect, was denied the proper fulfilment of its object. God's design, indeed, in bringing St. Gregory would rather appear to have been the saving of a noble soul from the ravages of a false belief. The Patriarch at this time was St. Eutychius, who, for a warning to us of the need of self-distrust and watchfulness, as Father Ribadaneira observes, "although a holy man, did nevertheless after suffering banishment for the faith, working many miracles, and being eminent for much virtue, fall, by a singular dispensation of God's providence, into a grievous error. For he believed and taught that our bodies, al-

though raised to life, would not be palpable, nor clad with the bright robe of glory, nor endowed with the gifts of immortality and subtility." The zealous deacon allowed no false humility or human respect to deter him from opposing what he knew to be contrary to faith.

With a modesty more admirable even than his quick perception, acute discrimination, and ready reply, he drew from his rich store of scriptural knowledge such arguments as completely overthrew the mistaken views of the Archbishop. The latter's victory over himself was still more complete. For galling as it must have been to see his opponent scatter with a few plain and unanswerable distinctions all the force of his supporting texts, he yet, with the most charming humility, acquiesced in the Emperor's wish that those of his writings which were tainted should be publicly burnt. The sincerity of his recantation he proved soon after when in his last moments, and "when I myself," relates St. Gregory, "was sick of a most violent fever, and certain of my acquaintances went to give him greeting; as I have learnt from their narration, before their eyes he held up the skin of his own hand, saying 'I confess that we shall rise again in this flesh.' A thing which he himself avowed he had been used formerly to deny." [A.D. 582.] It may have been on occasion of this discussion that St. Gregory commenced his *Moral Exposition of the Book of Job*, a work that he approached with great diffidence, being almost appalled by its many difficulties, for it was ground hitherto unworked. It was only indeed after much prayer that he continued it, being urged and encouraged thereto by the brethren, and by St. Leander, Bishop of Seville, who at this time represented the affairs of Spain at the imperial court. As Gregory's letters testify, these two conceived for each other a lifelong regard and friendship, based upon the holiest motives.

Tiberius died in August, 582, four months after his Bishop, without having been able to send any succour to the Pope. He was replaced by Maurice, his son-in-law, who showed the same sincere regard for Gregory and begged him to stand sponsor for his infant son.

Maurice, however willing, could do little or nothing to relieve the Pope, who at last recalled Gregory; and before many months had passed over our Saint's head, he again found himself within the much-desired shelter of his monastery. The brethren, among them being perhaps our own St. Augustine, would welcome him with a joy proportioned to their love, a love which had prompted a number of them, along with Maximianus the Abbot, to undertake a toilsome journey and actually risk their lives, merely to satisfy its cravings by visiting him while he was at Constantinople. With what a holy enthusiasm too they would help to unpack his treasures, which comprised most precious relics, namely, the head of St. Luke, and an arm of their own venerated Patron, St. Andrew.

Soon their desires were gratified by his acceptance of the dignity of Abbot. He exacted the strict observance of their rule with the utmost severity; and allowed no thoughts of personal favour to influence his government, as appears from the following incident. The monk Justus, his former medical attendant, had himself fallen sick, and the brethren were scandalized to learn of his having kept back for his own use three gold pieces, thus breaking the time-honoured rule, that all property should be in common. The Abbot, after considering the case well, forbade the others to assemble in prayer around the death-bed, and Justus, grieved to the heart at being left to fight his last battle unsupported, was told the reason of their absence. And although he died with every mark of sorrow, Gregory's original order was fulfilled to the letter, that the body should be cast into a foul ditch, and along with it the coins, while the monks all cried out, "Keep thy money to perish with thee." (Acts viii. 20.) A month afterwards, the Saint ordered thirty daily Masses to be offered for the departed religious, and after the last one, Justus appeared to his brother Copiosus, who was a physician well known in the city, and declared that his soul had passed from a state of suffering and purgation to the abode of the blessed.

Besides the government of his monastery, St. Gregory had still his duties to discharge in the city as Deacon, and those also of Papal Secretary. Pelagius was bent upon healing the schism of the Bishops of Istria, who refused to condemn the *Three Chapters*,* and he made use of Gregory's talents for that end. He first wrote assuring them of Rome's perfect accord with the first four Councils, and dilating on the evils of schism, but abstained from any discussion of the vexed question. A second letter followed, which received, like the first, a contumacious answer. The third assumed the proportions of a dogmatic treatise, calculated to convince any except the incurably obstinate, such as Elias and his suffragans appear to have been.

590. Gregory elected Pope.

The closing months of the year 589 were marked by continued and heavy rain, which so swelled the Tiber that it rose to an unusual height in the streets of Rome. But the damage done by the mere inundation was small in comparison with the evil results that followed. For the floods bore down the usual load of carcasses and of corrupt matter, and venomous serpents, alive and dead. Much of this filth lodged in the city, where it soon bred or perhaps rather fed a violent plague. Pope Pelagius was among the earliest victims, dying on Feb. 8th, 590.

His bereaved flock turned quite naturally to the one man who for a score of years, in spite of his humility and love of seclusion, had been foremost in their thoughts and closest to their hearts. Gregory was elected with one consent to be Bishop of Rome. Over many an election before, the Roman Emperors had claimed to exercise control, by approving of the Bishop when chosen, and to this, though without acknowledging it as a right, the Popes submitted from motives of prudence. Our humble Saint now eagerly availed himself of the custom, as of a loophole through which his retiring spirit might creep back again into obscurity He wrote off at once

* See p. 16.

to Maurice, entreating him to withhold his approval, and warmly appealing to his friendly feelings for relief from a burden far too weighty for his shoulders.

Meanwhile his deeply-rooted charity prompted him to comply with the wish of all concerned, and assume the full direction of affairs. In his eyes the pestilence was a clear manifestation of God's wrath—vast numbers he asserts were seen to fall before heaven-sent darts—and his first care was to exhort the people in repentance, in a sermon preserved for us by St. Gregory of Tours, whose deacon was an eyewitness of these dire events.

Stirred up by his words, the poor panic-stricken people forgot their aimless and powerless terror for the while, in the pursuit of a united purpose, and assembled in seven bands to implore God's mercy through the intercession of His saints, by singing their litanies. Gregory arranged and directed all, acting it may be as precenter, for which his musical taste well qualified him.

He led them in procession to their final station at St. Peter's, bearing aloft that picture of our Blessed Lady which some assert to have been painted by St. Luke. And although the pestilence was so severe as to carry off within an hour eighty of those gathered together, St. Gregory, undismayed and unwearied, persevered in storming Heaven with acts of penance and devotion. At last, according to the story as told at Jervaux Abbey in the 14th century, he was permitted like David (1 Paralip. xxi., 16), to see the destroying Angel, who stayed his hand and sheathed his sword over the Mole of Hadrian, where now stands the Castle of St. Angelo.

The Pope-elect, when the plague had abated, found time to think about his own affairs. As he had relied upon the effect of his letter to Maurice, he so far fancied that his solitude was secure. With all the greater shock must the news have come upon him, that an imperial letter had arrived, expressive of the fullest approval and the most sincere delight at Gregory's election. He had still one resource, to imitate his patron St. Gregory Nazianzen. And when the clergy and people of Rome, triumphing in the success of their watchfulness—for the

letter in which he had trusted had been stopped, and another forwarded instead, of a vastly different tenor, by the prefect Germanus whom some believe to have been the Saint's brother,—when his joyous flock presented themselves at St. Andrew's to conduct their Pontiff to his Basilica, their hearts sank low indeed at finding that he had escaped from the city.

Messengers were at once despatched to search for him, while by fasting and prayer his flock besought Heaven for his restoration to them. Of the Saint's own reflections during the three days that he lay hid, we have most probably a very faithful reproduction in the first part of the book, *Of the Pastoral Charge*, in which, like St. Chrysostom in his Six Books of the Priesthood, he gives the reasons for his flight.

His devoted pursuers were at length led to his hiding-place by a light, not of earth, that gleamed over it. He could not fail to see in these beams from above a counterpart of the light of consolation and of confidence in God which now flooded his soul, in spite of the tears that were still upon his cheeks; and in her inmost depths, his soul caught the whisper of her delightful Guest: "I have found David my servant; with my holy oil I have anointed him. For my hand shall help him, and my arm shall strengthen him. The enemy shall have no advantage over him; nor the son of iniquity have power to hurt him." (Ps. 88, 21.)

Strong in this trust of divine grace, he turned to those who stood respectfully awaiting him. "Unworthy as I am to take upon myself the burdens of a bishopric, I yield to the bidding of Almighty God and of your will, who more in the abundance of your affection than in the esteem of your judgment, have wished to have me set over you." (Ep. 32, bk. i.)

In their company, which would soon be augmented, when the good news spread, by joyful bands of the Roman people, the new Pontiff entered the city to take upon himself the sublime charge committed first to St. Peter, the highest dignity on earth, that of ruling the whole flock of Christ, sheep and lambs, bishops who

lead and faithful who follow. When the needful preparations had been made, he received Episcopal consecration, and mounted the throne of Peter on September 3rd, 590, being in his 49th or 50th year.

His appreciation of the Papal dignity.

That he had been sincere in fleeing from such high honours, is proved by his first letters, written not to strangers, but to familiar and cherished friends, men who had long shared the secrets of his bosom, and whom he would scarce attempt to deceive by an artificial regret and a threadbare imposture. His was the only heart that had failed to rejoice at the appointment, and in terms most distressing to his humility, congratulations had been poured in upon him by nobles, princes, and bishops. We can fancy them reading his answers from parchments blurred with his tear-drops, teeming as they do with regret for his happy life in the cloister, and awe at the boundless extent of his cares and obligations. His dignity he describes as a binding chain; its duties are a burden that press him down to the earth; his elevation is ruin itself, for his pinnacle of contemplation from which he used to gaze upon heavenly joys, has crumbled away. He who for the very purpose of avoiding worldly distractions first sought the harbour of the monastery now complains: "I am a slave to earthly cares, to the like of which I never remember myself subjected during my life as a layman."

An abiding sorrow had indeed fallen upon him, that betrayed itself at times in his looks, and was never removed. In all this he had one consolation, that he was submitting to the yoke of the Lord; he placed great trust in his friends' prayers, which he continually implored and conjured them to pour out for him.

And what were his theological views of his position? For there is a theory that St. Gregory refused the title and authority of Supreme Pontiff, styling himself rather "servant of the servants of God." "The Patriarch of Constantinople, John the Faster," says, for instance, a

prominent writer,* "called himself the Œcumenical or General Patriarch, meaning that he was Bishop of all other Bishops; but Gregory refused to acknowledge this title in any one else, or to have it given to himself."

Hence it seems well, at the very outset, to group together various passages from his writings, to show what really he held concerning this divine institution.

1. He founds the claim of the See of Rome to be regarded as supreme over all other sees, and as custodian of the true faith for all the world, upon the same basis as did his predecessors, namely, the fact that it was the See of St. Peter "who held the princedom of holy Church by authority of God." † In the second letter, written in the name of Pope Pelagius to the Bishops of Istria, he quotes with approval the words of St. Cyprian, the illustrious martyr, in the book which he styled *Of the Name of Unity:* "The commencement takes its rise from unity, and the primacy is given to Peter, that Christ's Church and Chair may be shown to be one;" and again, "He that holdeth not the unity of the Church, doth he believe himself to hold the faith? He that abandoneth and resisteth the chair of Peter, upon which the Church is founded, doth he trust to be in the Church?"

In the first letter Gregory had written, after quoting St. Luke xxii. 31–32: "Consider, dearly beloved, the Truth could not lie; and that the faith of Peter will never be able to be shaken or changed; for though the devil asked to have all the disciples to sift, for Peter alone does the Lord declare that He has prayed, and He wished that by him the others should be confirmed." ‡ And some nine years later, when writing to the Emperor,§ he lays down the same text, side by side with St. John xxi. 17, and St. Matt. xvi. 8, as the ground of the assertion: "It is clear to all who know the Gospel, that by

* Eighteen Centuries of Beginnings of Church History: by Charlotte Mary Yonge, p. 136.

† Of the Pastoral Charge, Part II., c. 6. ‡ Baronius, Ann. 586.

§ Ep. 20, bk. v. in the new order published by the Benedictine Fathers at Paris in 1705: the edition henceforward quoted.

the Lord's voice the charge of the whole Church was entrusted to Peter, the holy and chief Apostle of all the Apostles." St. Peter is indeed, in Gregory's eyes, the perpetual holder, possessor, and master of the diocese of Rome: "We who though unworthy have received the government of the Apostolic See in the place of Peter Prince of the Apostles;" he is ever identified with the reigning Pontiff, and their common cause is that too of God Himself and of the whole Church, which along with Gospel and Canon, is attacked by the assumption of the title Universal Bishop.* "Although Gregory's sins be so great that he ought to suffer such things, there are no sins of St. Peter the Apostle to merit for him these sufferings." † "The Lord Venantius came to blessed Peter the Apostle to ask urgently of me." ‡

2. St. Gregory asserted in words and maintained by act the Primacy of the Roman Bishop.

"The Apostolic See," he wrote in 592, "by appointment of God, stands set over other churches." And elsewhere, "if any fault be found in Bishops, I know not what Bishop is not subject to this See."§

To omit mention of numberless exercises of authority within his own Patriarchate, or as Metropolitan of the Roman Province, to John of Constantinople he administered a most severe rebuke for delaying to answer certain questions regarding a priest and some monks treated with undue rigour, and for professing in the end an utter ignorance of the case.‖

In the next year, being appealed to by the priest Adeodatus, who complained of unjust removal from his church during a two months' sick leave, the Pope ordered Clementius, Primate of Byzacene in Africa, to make careful and strict enquiry into the case; ¶ the intruded priest, if found guilty of simony, was to be debarred all further exercise of his sacred functions.

* Ep. 48, bk. ii., A.D. 591. † Ep. 20, 21, bk. v.

‡ Ep. 53, bk. ii.; and frequently in all his letters. A similar usage of speech obtained in England in Saxon times; See A. S. Chronicle, pp. 26, 27, 38, &c., vol. ii.

§ Ep. 30, bk. iii.; and Ep. 59, bk. ix. ‖ Ep. 53, bk. iii.

¶ Ep. 13, iv.

Gregory suspended also an intruded Archbishop of Spalatro and his consecrators from their sacred office, under penalty of excommunication, "anathema from God and from blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles."*

In one of the very letters indeed in which he condemns as "a proud and pestiferous epithet, a new, rash and superstitious name," the designation of a bishop as 'Universal,' he reminds the bishops of the East how Pelagius II. had nullified the acts of the Synod where it had been assumed, and declares, "if anyone shall spurn these presents in any part, let him know himself cut off from the peace of blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles."†

3. Finally, he accepts without demur, acknowledgments of supremacy, which recognise in Rome "the first Apostolic See, that most holy see which transmits its rights to the Universal Church;" ‡ and allows himself to be called "Holy Father of Fathers," § but as constantly rejects the title Universal Bishop, after the example of his predecessors, to whom in honour of blessed Peter Prince of the Apostles, it was offered during the venerable Council of Chalcedon, and afterwards by succeeding bishops.

Whatever in short John of Constantinople meant by "Universal Bishop," which in 588 had brought down upon his synod a prompt exercise of Rome's universal jurisdiction—the nullifying of its acts by Pelagius in a papal letter couched in the severest terms of reproval—Pope Gregory understood it to signify not "Bishop of all others Bishops," but "Bishop *exclusive* of all other Bishops, solitary, single Bishop," not "supreme, chief Bishop." "If one, as he argues, be universal, then it remains that you are not Bishops," he wrote to the Bishops of the East; and to the Empress, "He strives to be called the only Bishop, scheming to reduce beneath him all things that appertain to the one sole head,

* Epp. 20-47, bk. iv. 25-27, bk. vi. A.D. 594-596.
† Ep. 68, bk. ix. ‡ Ep. 57. bk. iii.
§ Epp. 16 and 17, bk. xiv.; Compare this with the words of St. Cyril of Alexandria at the Council of Ephesus in 431: "the most holy Celestine, Archbishop of the whole world, and father and Patriarch of the great city Rome."—Ep. 30, bk. v: and 30, bk. viii.

namely, Christ."* And it was in this sense that he repudiated it, and declared he would do so even at the cost of his life.

590-594. First years of his Rule.

The first view of government, as presented to Gregory's eyes, was one well calculated to daunt even an intrepid ambition and to quell a restless activity: nothing, truly, short of heroic courage, instilled and upheld by divine grace, could have stood before it. The Eternal City, to begin with, must have worn the aspect of a desert, depopulated as it was by the plague, which still exacted tribute from the thin ranks of the citizens. An earthquake and a violent storm heaped ruin upon desolation, throwing down the walls, and wrecking churches and public buildings. Then close after sickness and disaster came starvation, and when the poor people, with whom Gregory's charity was already a proverb, resorted to him in their extreme need, he was utterly distressed to learn that last winter's floods had undermined the papal granaries and swept away some thousands of bushels of corn. It wanted but an ever-threatened incursion of the barbarous Lombards to fill up the measure of misery. The slight check put upon these marauders a few months before, had been quite inadequate, and their encroachments caused an almost hourly anxiety. But they refrained from invading the capital, a blessing which its Prelate ascribed to the protection of the holy Apostles SS. Peter and Paul.

In the "new Rome," Constantinople, its Patriarch was scandalizing the Church and endangering her unity, by his imitation of the lost Archangel, who spurning the legions of Angels associated with him as companions, strove to start up to a height of singularity that he might appear subject to none and alone supreme over all; who said, "I will ascend above the height of the clouds; I will be like the Most High." (Is. xiv. Ep. 18, bk. v.)

Spain had not ceased groaning from the ravages of the Arian Visigoths, under the impious and ruthless

* Epp. 21, 18 and 43, bk. v.

king Leovigild, who martyred his convert-son St. Hermenigild, and had not many months been removed by death. The same heresy in Africa was still arming the cruel Vandals against Bishops and people alike, and in this province also the Donatists were snatching and scattering the flock of Christ. Here again, as in Gaul, and in parts of Italy itself, the wounds inflicted on Christ's Mystical Body, by the lamentable misunderstanding of the *Three Chapters*, were yet raw and bleeding.

Poor distant Britain too! Her comely Angles, untaught even still, for no other heart had gone out to them as his own had done fifteen years before, worshipped their stocks and stones with unseemly sacrifice.

Turn which way he would to remedy these and countless other ills, Gregory was beset by some lesser care to engage his attention. "In this place, forsooth," he lamented to his friend St. Leander, "I am buffeted by such waves of this world, that I can in no wise bring to port the aged and decaying bark which by secret ordering of God, I have got to pilot. Now the waves pour in at the prow, now the seas swell up in mountains of foam at the side, now the tempest drives on at the stern." But his zeal animated him against all trials and opposition; the higher the billows and the fiercer the winds that arose, the more fervent became his suit at the Throne of Grace, the stronger and more deeply-rooted grew his confidence in God.

Within four months of his accession, a Synod was convened at Rome, to stem the most violent of these evils, the schism of the *Three Chapters*. St. Gregory had all along, with the clearest insight, urged the distinction between belief condemned and persons approved.

The Three Chapters—certain writings in which Theodore and Theodoret, Bishops of Mopsuesta and of Cyrrus, and Ibas writing to one Maris,—were condemned after a long and careful examination by a council which met for that purpose at Constantinople in 553, and which was fully confirmed and approved by Pope Vigilius. Having small knowledge of the Acts of this, the fifth Ecumenical Council, and influenced perhaps by false representations

of it, many in the West persistently refused to give adhesion to its decrees, as having opposed previous Councils, and mainly that of Chalcedon. The truth was that Theodoret and Ibas,—Theodore being already dead,—had been compelled at Chalcedon to give a verbal profession of orthodoxy, and had been reconciled. Their writings, in the press of more urgent matters had remained unconsidered. Hence, Pope Vigilius and the Fathers at Constantinople,—who constantly professed the utmost reverence for previous Councils, and absolute agreement with them,—had but performed what was left undone, not attempted to alter anything done.

Severus of Acquileia, leader of the schism in north-eastern Italy, was now bidden to meet his colleagues in Rome, but disobeyed. The troubled state of the land was reason more than enough to prevent his being coerced, and for a time no greater success appeared likely to attend St. Gregory's efforts than was achieved by his no less zealous predecessor.

The Synod however brought out the Pontiff's eagerness for home-reform. Among other things he ruled that henceforth no layman should be employed in attendance upon the Pope's person. And at this time he ordered the destruction of many figures of demons, and of diabolical carvings that had been allowed to disgrace the city and suburbs.

His letters, moreover, give abundant proof that his pastoral zeal was in no whit lessened by rebuffs. Among them stands out the synodal letter to the other Patriarchs, containing a most valuable disquisition on the eminence and sanctity of the care of souls, a reproduction in fact to some extent, of the Book of the Pastoral Charge. In conclusion he writes:—"As the four books of the Holy Gospel, so, I avow, do I receive and reverence the four Councils. The fifth Council also, I likewise reverence. . . Whoever thinks other than they, let him be anathema." (Ep. 25, bk. i.)

The holy Father's efforts in every department, tempered as they were only by such recreation as was afforded by relating and discussing his many legends of holy

persons, and by composition of his book on Job, brought on a renewed attack of his early disorder, and he was compelled to take some weeks' rest, during which he wrote his *Dialogues*. The miracles with which it abounds have brought upon it the scoffs of modern sceptics; the style, as its author intended, is conversational, and on that account below the level of his other works; but it met with an almost universal welcome, and has re-appeared in various languages.

Apostle of England.*

For some four years the Pope was apparently unable to give attention to the Angles. A rumour had reached him that they had expressed a desire to be converted to the Christian faith,† and he had directed his agent in Gaul, Candidus, "to purchase English slave-boys of the age of seventeen or eighteen years, that having been consecrated to God in the monasteries they may make spiritual progress. . . ."

A few months afterwards, St. Augustine and his band of forty monks had started on their journey through Gaul for Britain. They bore with them letters to Theoderic and Theodebert, and Brunehild, the Sovereigns of the Franks, in which St. Gregory, while rebuking the remissness of the Bishops of Gaul, desires them to further the advance of the missioners to the best of their power, commending St. Augustine's zeal and energy in very high terms. In a similar strain he wrote to the bishops through whose sees they would have to pass.

Sorely disappointed must the zealous Pontiff have been, when Augustine returned after a comparatively short absence, with the tidings that his little band was much discouraged by the rumours poured into their ears of the ferocity of their intended neophytes, and sadly dispirited by assertions that their task was a hopeless one. But they had chosen a very lukewarm advocate of their views, and Augustine soon rejoined them, having been promoted from the dignity of prior to that of abbot.

* See C.T.S. Life of St. Augustine, price 1d. † Ep. 58, bk. vi.

His superior had furnished him with a letter, urging the monks to "carry out to the full the good work that by the Lord's help you have begun . . . . . May Almighty God protect you by His grace, and grant to me to see the fruit of your labour in our eternal country. So that, although I may not labour along with you, I may be found along with you in the joy of your reward, for I wish, in sooth, so to labour. May God keep you safe, dearest sons."

Preacher and Doctor of the Church.

St. Gregory was mindful of the Apostle's lesson that one of a Bishop's first duties is to preach the gospel, and has left behind him a large collection of homilies, upon the Gospels and upon Ezechiel. In the Benedictine Annals we read how one afflicted with an almost incurable spiritual dryness met with this holy Pope's sermons, and read and read with ever-increasing gladness of soul, until the gloom of despair gave place to fervour of devotion and delight of heavenly things.

The congregations which always crowded the basilicas when he was to preach, could scarcely fail to derive less profit from his spoken word, especially when at times they saw their beloved Father preaching, in spite of such weakness, that his voice could barely reach them all, or even compelled to forego the precious task, and sit while others read what he had already carefully composed.

The Saint's sermons are short, particularly those on days of lengthened ceremony or arduous fast. Hence they admit of no very lofty flights of rhetoric, but have the ring of that genuine eloquence, speaking from the heart's sincere conviction. Depth of thought is expressed in clear and simple language, and a long and earnest pondering of the Sacred Text has enabled the preacher to make every word of it almost convey some lesson.

If the beloved disciple's sermon was ever, "Love one another," that of St. Gregory, like the other John's, was "Do penance, for the kingdom of God is at hand."

(St. Matt. iii. 2.) He would turn to account recent events, and by them direct the thoughts of his flock to the life to come: and at times digressed awhile to lash some prevailing folly, as excessive show in dress. With St. Augustine, he knew the value of a strongly-marked contrast like the following: "Two hearts below,—of Dives and Lazarus,—one Watcher above, Who by trial was exercising this one for glory, and by forbearance awaiting that other for punishment."

But one grand feature of these discourses is the apt use of that endless store of examples collected in the monastery. For people and priest alike, as the Saint would observe, are aided in blameless and upright advance along the narrow path by fixing their gaze upon God's servants. And he commonly set up for honour and imitation not saints of far-off lands, but heroes connected with their own soil and clime,—a pattern that might be more profitably copied in our land, rich as it is with saints of every rank and degree. Treating for instance of humility, he adduced St. Peter, "first on the summit of the Apostolate and first in humility. For consider, dearest brethren, upon what loftiness of mind he stood, who praised St. Paul's epistles, in which he found it written that he was himself deserving of blame.* What must have been his meekness, what his quiet of soul, his solidity of mind, and calm control of thought. See him chidden by his inferior, and he disdains not to be chidden: all the gifts he had received he banished as it were from memory, that he might stoutly hold fast the one gift, humility." †

"But then does the seed of the word readily bud forth, when it is watered in the hearer's breast by the preacher's piety," is St. Gregory's own remark.‡ And so, when a certain Abbot John had journeyed from Persia to venerate the sacred bodies of SS. Peter and Paul, and meeting in Rome's street, Peter's worthy successor and imitator, knelt before him, the Pope not

* Gal. ii., 11 and 14. † On Ezech. hom. 6, bk. ii., no. 9.

‡ *Pastoral Charge*, pt. ii., ch. vii.

only tried to prevent him,* but actually bent his own knee until the other rose. He could well preach compassion for the poor, whose charities were bounded only by the extent of an almost princely patrimony. And when his researches brought to light any whose lot had not always been poverty, he took care to send them such food as they had been used to enjoy in better days. Nor was his generosity that which prides itself upon heading a subscription list, and then burns the glove which a beggar has presumed to touch in taking the daintily-given dole. He waited in person on the poor fed at his expense at St. Andrew's, calling the old men by the honoured name of "Father," and none were so welcome as they who could chat with him on the saints they had known. Once he deprived himself for days of the consolation of saying Mass, because he laid it to the charge of his neglect that a poor man was found starved to death in the street.

It is observed that "none of the Fathers has written better on humility; he is truly to be styled 'the Doctor of humility,' as Augustine 'the Doctor of Grace.' Let us hear him on Image-worship and Relics. "We send you a little blessed cross of Peter the Apostle, with the benefit of part of his chains inserted . . . may they free your neck from the yoke of sin. Around it is part of blessed Laurence's gridiron on which he was burnt, . . that it may inflame your mind with love of the Lord."† Like St. Paul, he was constantly invoking the prayers of the holy while living, and asks: "because in heaven they all see God in one common glory, what is there that they do not know, when they know Him who knoweth all things?"‡

"That you have had zeal against the adoration of anything made with hands, we have praised.§ But it is one thing to adore a painting, another by story of a painting to learn what is to be adored. For what writing does for those who read, this painting does for the ignorant. . . . And not without reason has

* Cp., *Acts* x., 26.

† Ep. 33, bk. iii.

‡ Dial., iv., 33.

§ Epp. 105, ix., 13, xi.

antiquity allowed the stories of the Saints to be told by paintings in the sacred places."

Speaking elsewhere of the Holy Mass, "this Sacrifice," he says, "doth especially save our souls from everlasting damnation, . . . there His Body is received, there His Flesh is distributed for the salvation of the people. . . . what right-believing Christian can doubt, that in the very hour of the Sacrifice at the words of the priest, the heavens be opened, and the choirs of Angels are present in that mystery of Jesus Christ; that high things are accompanied with low, and earthly joined to heavenly; and that one thing is made of visible and invisible."*

The holy Bishop once noticed a smile upon a certain matron's face as he was about to give her the Sacred Host, and drawing back his hand, replaced It on the Altar. Mass finished, he demanded a public explanation of such irreverence, and at last wrung from her the admission, "Because you offered as the Lord's Body, the bread which I knew my own hands had made." By his prayers Gregory obtained the removal of the species of bread, and pointing to the Sacred Flesh and Blood miraculously unveiled, "Learn," said he, "to believe the Truth Himself, even now declaring 'The bread which I give is My flesh; and My Blood is drink indeed.' . . . By that power in which He made all things out of nothing, and by working of the Holy Ghost built up for Himself a body out of the flesh of the ever Virgin; for our reparation, by operation of the Holy Ghost, He changes bread and wine mingled with water,—their own species still enduring,—into His Flesh and Blood at the Catholic prayer."

604. His Death.

We find St. Gregory complaining that "what the mind has not willingly undertaken, it does not fittingly manage." But his untiring perseverance overcame in the end. Schism and heresy, if not stamped out, were

* Dialogues, bk. iv., cap. 58; *Quarterly Series*, Burns & Oates.

trampled into silence. Simony in his later years arose, but was not more victorious. The Lombards, by the efforts of Queen Theodolinda, under St. Gregory's advice, made peace and were converted in great numbers.

St. Gregory's thankfulness for St. Augustine's success in Britain is evinced, not merely in his letters, but in his books as well. Many times in the former we hear the echo of the song of joy with which he greeted the new Archbishop. "Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will, for that the Grain of Wheat falling into the ground has died, that It might not reign alone in Heaven, by Whose death we live, by Whose weakness we are made strong, by Whose suffering we are snatched from suffering, by Whose love we seek in Britain the brethren whom we knew not, and by Whose gift we find them, whom yet unknown to us we sought. For who could avail to tell what great joy has arisen here in the heart of all the faithful at tidings that the English nation, by the operation of God Almighty's grace, and the labours of your brotherhood, the darkness of error driven out, has been bathed in the light of holy faith; that with most upright mind it now tramples on the idols to which formerly in vain fear it prostrated." * And in the Moral Exposition of the Book of Job, we find inserted a reference to this success.

The original band of labourers had soon proved too small, and additional ones had been despatched to Britain, with many wise directions worthy of St. Gregory for the rule of that already flourishing corner of the vineyard. It is noteworthy that in his last extant letter to St. Augustine, written in June, 601, the Pontiff virtually asserts his jurisdiction over all the Bishops in the island, whether British or consecrated by St. Augustine himself.

As the years went on our Saint's industry never flagged, in spite of the gout which for many months at a time so afflicted him that he could scarcely leave his couch for a couple of hours to say Mass. He would still dictate;

* Ep. 28, bk. xi.

and would have himself carried to one of the two schools where his improved style of chant was taught, and would beat time for the boys as he lay.

At last, on the 12th of March, 604, came the summons, long desired and long prayed for. "The Lord comes," he had once said to his flock, "when He hastens to judgment. He knocks when by the troubles of sickness He shows death to be near. . . . He that is secure in his hope and in his work, opens at once to the knock, because he awaits the Judge with gladness. And when the time of immediate death approaches, he grows cheerful at thought of the glory of reward."

* * * * * * *

"Your forefathers sought His favour, so do you also seek it for yourselves, and take pains to keep it: let His honour be in no way lessened among you, who even now can be your helper in all things." *

The Saint himself now yearns to be our helper: from his throne he calls out to the sons of his dear Angles—"I exhort you that while the time of life remain, your souls be not found severed from the Church of Blessed Peter, to whom are entrusted the keys of the heavenly kingdom, and the power of binding and loosing is made over; lest if here you despise this his benefit hereafter he shut against you the entrance of life." † Will they still neglect his words?

* Ep. 21, bk. v. † Ep. 43, bk. iv.

THE DRINK TRAFFIC.*

THE subject of this paper consists of two main points: first, "The present evils of the Drink Traffic;" and secondly, "The practical remedies that can and ought to be applied." With regard to the first point, the subject deals not with the question of *Drink* but with the *Drink Traffic*, that is to say, the system now in vogue and countenanced by the law of the land of buying and selling intoxicating liquors. †

The subject takes for granted that certain "evils of the Drink Traffic" do exist. We have now to inquire what those evils are—that is, as I understand the question, what evils arise from the drink traffic, and then what are their causes? First then, what are the present evils of the drink traffic? Here I must dwell upon the evils arising generally from the use of intoxicating drink, tracing them afterwards to the drink traffic as their main source.

These evils have been summarized as follows in the report of Intemperance laid before the Belgian Chamber of Representatives by M. Frère Orban, the Minister of Instruction in 1868: Nine-tenths of the paupers; three-fourths of the criminals; one half of the diseases; one-third of the insanity; three-fourths of the depravity of children and young people; one third of the shipwrecks. These are the drink results for England as given in that report. They proceed from a careful investigation by a responsible and impartial body of educated men, and the summary may be taken as at

* A Paper read at the Catholic Conference, 1891.

† For the purposes of this paper, I exclude the wine and spirit merchants strictly so-called, who are on a different footing from other licensed dealers.

least fairly accurate. And though I fully admit that a considerable improvement has been made since the time when that report was issued, yet it is undeniable that even now intemperance is a very prolific source of the crime, the poverty, the insanity, in fine, of all the miseries of the country. Every day, almost, doctors, judges, philanthropists, statesmen are reminding us of this. Time will not permit of going into many details, but two of the points referred to merit a closer attention, inasmuch as they greatly affect the welfare of the Catholic Church in this country.

Let us take the Drink Bill, *i.e.*, the amount of money spent in intoxicating liquors in the United Kingdom for one year 1891. It amounts to £139,495,470, exceeding that of the previous year by about £7,250,000. Close on 140 millions spent on intoxicating drink! averaging an expenditure of £3 13s. per head of the entire population, including those, whether infants or adults, who never touch such drinks, and £18 5s. per family of five persons. The amount is one-twelfth of the income of the population; it exceeds by far the amount expended in any other article of consumption. Compare with this 140 millions, the amount spent in the support of churches, and benevolent institutions of all creeds—18 millions!

One twelfth of the entire income is spent in the purchase and consumption of intoxicating drinks. But wealth is not distributed equally: the expenditure of a certain sum is not felt by all classes alike. The loss of the £18 5s. apportioned as the share of each family in this matter is not perceived in the house of the millionaire, but it may be at least one-fourth of the income of the ordinary artizan, one half that of the agricultural labourer And it is very noteworthy that of the 140 millions, no less than 114 millions (in round numbers) have been spent in drink mostly used by the working classes and the poor, viz., British spirits, such as gin, and beer, besides the large amount spent in rum.

Now if we estimate the proportion of the expenditure in drink by Catholics of Great Britain—that proportion being calculated according to their ratio to the population

—the sum will amount to about six and a half millions sterling, a rough calculation, but sufficient for our purpose. Canon Murnane, in 1890, in a paper on the Temperance Movement, speaking of a mission of 10,000 people, stated that they were spending £25,000 to £30,000 a year in drink. Is this an exaggeration? I believe it to be under rather than over the mark.

Of this six and a half millions, deduct what may be conceded for purposes of health, refreshment, or pleasure without excess—whatever that may be—there still remains a very large sum, amounting to at least one half—or about three and three quarter millions—which if properly employed would go towards enriching generally the Catholic body, allowing a good margin for works of piety and charity. Not only this, but the large sums which are annually expended in consequence of the amount mis-spent in drink, such, for instance, as the support, whether through public or private resources, of the spendthrifts themselves or of their children, the increased rates, the waste of labour and trade, and the rest—the greater part of this would be saved, and could be devoted to other purposes. The whole social status of the Catholic body would be raised, the difficulty in providing for priests, churches, schools, would be removed, means for supplying our wants for pious and charitable purposes would be available, and from being a poor community—in many respects behind other denominations on account of our poverty—we should soon be in a state of prosperity, could we but stop the great drain of our resources in this matter of drink. It has been stated that had the Church but one shilling a year from every Catholic in the country it would have an ample supplementary subsidy for its missions and schools. To procure this one shilling yearly from every Catholic was the aim of Daniel O'Connell in the Catholic Institute. O'Connell failed: but the publican with comparative ease has been gathering in year after year, not a shilling per head, but *pounds* per head of Catholic money.

But this, the enormous waste of Catholic resources, is not the only evil fruit of the Drink Traffic. There

is another evil more pernicious by far—the loss of souls. It would be needless for me to adduce external authority as to the connection between drink and sin, needless to bring forward the numerous declarations of Judges and statesmen, who within a very recent period have stated that drunkenness is the source of by far the larger part of the crime of the country. We have the solemn declaration of the Hierarchy, read out from the pulpit month after month, "that wide-spread habit of intemperance is the prolific cause of a multitude of evils which afflict this country. It degrades and destroys the body and soul of innumerable Christians, and is perpetually offering before the throne of God, most heinous offences against His Divine Majesty." This is the pronouncement of the whole body of the English hierarchy, and individual Bishops also have given their testimony. Cardinal Manning has written: "Intemperance in intoxicating drinks is a vice that stands head and shoulders above all the vices by which we are afflicted,"* and the Bishop of Middlesbro,' commenting on these words, says: "There is not a priest who for ever so short a period has had the care of souls in any of our great centres of population but would be able within his own experience to bear witness to the truth, the appalling truth, contained in the words of the Cardinal Archbishop."† Close on a score of years I have been a priest, and never yet have I met with a Catholic whose faith in the Church has been in the least degree shaken by the "continuity" theory, or who has stayed from Mass on Sundays, or neglected his Easter duties because the High Church party claim to have valid orders and seven Sacraments; but is there a priest in the country, a brother of St. Vincent de Paul, a Sister of Charity—a worker of any kind amongst the people, who has not known many cases of Catholics falling from virtue and from religion through intemperance? And it is in the public house and gin palaces that the habit of intemperance is for the most part —at all events amongst the poorer classes

* *Our National Vice;* Catholic Truth Society.
† Advent Pastoral, 1890.

—acquired; it is in these places and in the licensed drinking and music saloons that is met the fatal company which ruin so many of our people.

It is generally acknowledged that of the boys and girls that leave our elementary schools, a large percentage—lamentably large—are for several years altogether lost to the Church. Whence comes this falling away? Mr. Whitwell in his evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the inquiry into the closing of public houses on Sundays, held in 1878, stated that he had visited a large number of the gin shops in London on a Sunday night between 8 and 11 o'clock, and he found that one-third of those present were boys under twenty, another third women and girls, and another third men, many of whom were the worse for drink. He also stated that on a certain night, presumably a Sunday, in February of that year, a number of public houses were watched to see how many persons entered. They averaged altogether 1,052, and of those, 687 were men, 220 were women, and 145 children. By "children" he means boys and girls from the age of four or five, to eleven or twelve; the young men and young women are included among the adults. We need not inquire whether those children and young people were, or were not, to any degree intoxicated. Doubtless many were there, not from choice,—perhaps because they had to accompany their parents, or to bring home a supply of drink. But their mere presence there is an evil. Is the public house or gin shop a fitting place for a young man or young girl? Surely not, and still less for a child. Can we wonder at so many of our youth going to the bad when we know the school they frequent? I do not for a moment imply that the frequenting of the public house is the only source of the diminution of our numbers, but I do maintain that it is one factor, and so influential a factor that it would be folly for us to shut our eyes to it.

And what are the causes that lead to the evils referred to above?

(1) The first cause of the evils is the excessive facility for obtaining intoxicating drink, that excessive

facility being in itself a danger and a temptation. The cause is two-fold: 1st, the excessive number of licensed houses; 2nd, the opening of these houses at times when the people have most money and are least occupied—hence the temptation to drink. The excessive number of houses of various kinds, licensed for the sale of intoxicating drinks, is, in itself, a natural and very fruitful source of evil. The Government of 1872, in the Bill proposed by Mr. Bruce, then Home Secretary, decided, after an exhaustive inquiry, that one public house per thousand of the population in towns, and one per six hundred in the country, would be ample provision. This Bill, if carried, would have reduced the number of licensed houses in England and Wales from about 100,000 to 35,000 or 40,000. Last year the number of licensed houses in England and Wales was 139,462 or one to 188 of the population. In London and other large cities there are many courts and alleys with a public house at each entrance. This means that the inhabitants cannot go in and out of the street or alley without passing the public house, and being subject to temptation. Many of the courts and streets so beset with temptations are inhabited almost wholly by Catholics. This, the alleged excess in the number of licensed houses, is not mere fancy on the part of temperance advocates; it has been admitted by the statesmen of all parties, and has been the basis of the many attempted, but mostly abortive, reforms of the licensing laws.

(2) A second abuse whereby the evils of the Drink Traffic arise, is the system of "tied houses," whereby the retail seller is reduced to the position of a servant of the producer, bound to sell his liquor, removable at his will. It is thus in every way to his interest to push the consumption, as far as possible. Some idea of the extent of this system may be formed from the following figures: in London 10,000 licences are owned by persons who are other than the publicans; in Manchester, the number is 2,054; in Liverpool, 2,008: in Sheffield, 1,102; in Bristol, 893; in Portsmouth, 806; in Norwich, 605; in Salford, 567; in Nottingham, 541; in Hull, 460; in Leicester, 402.

(3) A third abuse is the legislative system hitherto in vogue of granting licences irrespective of the will of the people, or of the supposed requirements of the neighbourhood, looking to the good of the publican—provided that his conduct be satisfactory and his house suitable—rather than to the good of the public.

(4) A fourth source of evil is the fact that a large share of the revenue is derived from the licences, and the excise taxes, thereby affording a strong temptation to any government not to put hindrance in the way of the Drink Traffic.

Now we come to the second question: "What practical remedies can, and ought to be applied?" Here I am somewhat restricted in my suggestion, by the word *practical* and by the word *remedies*—in the plural. If I had my way, there should be but one remedy, perhaps not a "practical" one, but it would be effectual. *Make a clean sweep of the Drink Traffic*, and before long no remedies will be required. But as there seems to be no Hercules to cleanse the Augean stables, we must needs fall back upon remedies which are practical, though I can scarcely call them effectual. Here are a few such:

(1) *Education.* If what I have stated in the first part of this paper as to the evils of the Drink Traffic be admitted, it follows naturally that it is of the utmost importance that the alarm should be sounded, that attention should be aroused, and information imparted on the evils of the Drink Traffic, their causes and their remedies. It is important that all should be educated on this point: the intemperate that they be awakened to the danger of their state and learn the advantages of temperance; the sober, that they may guard against temptation and may be able to succour the weak. I might even venture to say that it would not be amiss were some of our excellent and zealous temperance advocates somewhat better informed on certain topics connected with the cause. But especially in elementary schools would education on this point be beneficial. If we could but gain over the children; if we could bring up the coming generation sober, and break the entail to an inheritance of misery and ruin, what hope

might we not have for the future! Why are there not lessons on the evils of intemperance, the proper uses of strong drinks, the waste and consequent suffering brought on by expenditure at the public house, the advantages of temperance, and so on? In addition to the Temperance literature provided by the Catholic Truth Society, which may be read by adults and children alike there is an excellent temperance reader for schools, published by Messrs. Cassell; Dr. Richardson's temperance catechism and his other temperance works are also very suitable. The Band of Hope Union sends out lecturers to Schools and issues certificates to those children who report the lecture satisfactorily. Could not something of this kind be done by Catholics? could not a few persons of education be found who would be willing to work up this subject, and go round to schools and missions—not to speechify, but to lecture—to educate on the evils of the Drink Traffic and the blessings of Temperance?

(2) A second suggestion is contained in the following verse:

There is a little public house
That every one may close,
And that's the little public house
Just underneath the nose.

(3) Clubs, Reading-rooms, recreations of various kinds, and Penny Banks should be promoted as counter attractions to the public houses, but as these subjects have been treated at other times I need not dwell upon them. The same may be said with regard to sanitation and pure water. A good healthy home and pure water to cook with and to drink—"honest water which ne'er left man i' the mire," as our poet says—are great helps to Temperance and antidotes to the Drink Traffic.

(4) Those who wish the growth of the liquor Traffic stunted, will not invest their money in it, or take shares in any of the various limited liability companies into which many of the great liquor firms have lately been turned. By this financial proceeding, not only has a vast

amount of capital been acquired—and capital means power—but moreover a great number of persons besides those actually engaged in the trade have become personally interested in its prosperity.

(5) With regard to legislation: it is highly desirable that, as this question of the Drink Traffic is one so closely affecting Catholic interests, spiritual and temporal, there should be some responsible Catholic body entrusted with the duty of securing the enforcement of the existing laws, and promoting a healthier state—if there must be a state at all—of the drink system. On the first head—the enforcing of the existing laws—the following provisions already exist, though the breach of them is perhaps more frequent than the observance: spirits to be consumed on the premises may not be sold to or for persons apparently under the age of sixteen, nor intoxicating drinks of any kind to be consumed on the premises, to or for children under the age of thirteen; wages may not be paid in a public house; the landlord may not permit drunkenness or any violent, quarrelsome, or riotous conduct to take place on his premises, nor may he sell intoxicating liquor to any drunken person, nor to any person, save to *bona fide* travellers, during the hours prescribed for the closing of licensed houses. There is a penalty attached to the breach of any of these provisions. With regard to the second head, the improvement of the existing state of affairs, one very desirable object to be attained is the reduction of the number of licensed houses. How far the reduction of the number of these houses would effect a social improvement depends greatly upon circumstances. In some cases, for instance, where there are two or more public houses in close vicinity to each other, a withdrawal of one of the licenses would effect little more than the transference of the trade to the remaining houses, a result which might be even more detrimental than beneficial. In other cases, where the decrease in the number of licensed houses means a corresponding decrease in the facilities of obtaining drink and in temptations to intemperance, a very marked improvement in the morality of the district may be looked for. The village

of Kentmere in Cumberland is an instance to the point. The clergyman of the place states that by the withdrawal of the one licence in the village, "the moral tone of the whole valley is changed." At no period of Ireland's history was the country in such a flourishing state, so prosperous, so free from crime, in such a high condition socially and religiously as during those few years—too few alas !—when Father Mathew's movement had taken hold of the people and the public houses were closed for want of customers.

(6) I ask, whose interests are most affected by the establishment of a licensed house in the midst of an inhabited district ? Is it not the inhabitants themselves? Have they not therefore a just right that their wishes on this point should be attended to ? I would support and advise support to any good and just measure whereby the granting of licenses shall be subject to local popular control.*

(7) I suggest the formation of a Watch Committee who shall be on the *qui vive* for opposing the granting of new licenses and for opportunities of obtaining the withdrawal of existing ones. In the case of Sharpe *v.* Wakefield, the Kentmere case referred to above, the House of Lords decided that, save in the case of licenses granted during or previous to the year 1869, the licensing magistrates are entitled to take the want of the neighbourhood into consideration, and they have complete discretion as to the granting of fresh licenses or the renewal of old ones. Now, if on the application for a grant or a renewal being made, it were shown by a representative body that the licensed house was not wanted in the neighbourhood, the magistrates could scarcely fail to be influenced by such representation. This Watch Committee should also question candidates for Parliament on their views, and if possible exact a pledge from them to promote definite reforms. At the approaching election, this matter of licensing reform is sure to prove a burning question, and a Watch Committee of this kind might render signal service There are many other

* I purposely omit all reference to compensation.

ways in which such a body might prove extremely useful in remedying the evils of the Drink Traffic.

Lastly, this is a matter in which we must not work single handed. We have a strong enemy in the Drink Traffic, and in union must be our strength. First of all, Catholics must join together and work together. Shame on the apathetic indifference with which so many Catholics have viewed this paramount factor in our social and religious life—the drink question! It is a matter of life and death to us, and yet a great number hold themselves aloof, or at best, pursue what I may designate as an "armchair policy"—talking over the grievance and doing nothing to stop it. We must be united amongst ourselves and work. But in our work we can and may be helped by some non-Catholic bodies, and this without any sacrifice of Catholic teaching with regard to the use or abstention from strong drink. No association has done more to influence the public opinion towards temperance reform than the United Kingdom Alliance, which will co-operate in any measure which it judges to be conducive to a reform of the licensing laws. Catholics would do well to join hands with the Alliance. Perhaps when the millenium arrives we may have a real Catholic Parliamentary party, which will concern itself with all the objects tending to advance the religious and social interest of the Catholic body. Meanwhile we must do the best we can, pulling well together, and joining hands, where possible, with outsiders, to prevent or undo the mischief of the Drink Traffic.

W. H. Cologan.

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TWELVE FACTS

PROVING THAT THE ENGLISH CHURCH BEFORE THE REFORMATION WAS ROMAN CATHOLIC.

"ROMAN Catholic" means, first, any person or body of persons who receive all the articles of faith which the Catholic Church in communion with the See of Rome proposes to his or their belief.

That is the doctrinal test.

Before the Reformation the Church in England was absolutely one with the Church of Rome and with the whole Catholic Church then in communion with the Apostolic See, in all matters of faith and doctrine. I am not aware that this truth has ever been called in question.

Secondly, "Roman Catholic" means any person or body of persons who are recognised as fellow-Catholics by the whole Catholic Church in communion with the See of Rome.

This is the organic test.

Before the Reformation, the English Church was absolutely one in communion with the Roman See and with all the other Churches in communion with Rome. In those days, when an Archbishop of Canterbury went to Rome or journeyed on the Continent, he was received by the Pope and by every Catholic bishop on the route with the same cordiality and fraternity of faith as that with which Cardinal Vaughan or Archbishop Walsh would be welcomed at the present day.* Every English priest and Catholic layman received precisely the same recognition throughout Catholic Christendom as any Roman Catholic priest or layman would receive at the

* Witness the journey of Archbishop Lanfranc and the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Lincoln in 1070—Eadmer, *Hist. Novell.* pp. 6 and 7; of Archbishop Peckham in 1279; of Archbishop Chicheley in 1414.

present time. The organic union was as close and as complete as the doctrinal one.

Thirdly, "Roman Catholic" means a person or body of persons who recognize the Pope as possessing supreme spiritual jurisdiction in all parts of the Catholic Church.

This final test is both doctrinal and organic, and it is upon it that the whole proof may be said to chiefly depend.

Thus the entire question—Was the Church in this country before the Reformation Roman Catholic?—narrows itself down to one single obvious issue: Did or did not the English Church before the Reformation recognize the supreme spiritual jurisdiction of the Pope? That it did, I take to be one of the plainest facts in English history.

I now give a summary of the main facts which establish the recognition of Roman authority by the pre-Reformation Church in England.

Fact 1.—The Archbishops of Canterbury or Primates of the English Church were not enthroned or recognized until their appointment had been confirmed by the Pope.

Fact 2.—The Primates of the English Church went or sent to Rome for the pallium, and were solemnly invested with it. The pallium was a Y-shaped stole, of white wool, given by the Popes to Primates in various countries as a symbol of jurisdiction, and was worn on public occasions to show that the wearer had given to him special powers to act as the delegate or vicar of the Roman See. ("We grant you *authority*. . . so that by the *authority* of our precept" are the words of Pope Honorius to the Archbishop of Canterbury in A.D. 634. The words used in the Brief of the Pope granting the pallium to Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, in 959 are:—"Thy primacy, in which it belongs to you to act as a Vicar of the Apostolic See—*vices Apostolicæ Sedis exercere*—after the manner of thy predecessors, we confirm to thee as fully as St. Augustine and his successors, the bishops of the said Church, are known to have possessed it."—Mansi, *Collect. Concil.*, vol. xviii., p. 449.) Such was the importance attached by the Primates of the

English See to this investiture with the Roman pallium that, as Bishop Stubbs says, before receiving it they hardly ever ventured to exercise any archiepiscopal function; and Archbishop Courtenay, in 1382, although actually present at the consecration of the Bishops of London and Durham, refused to lay on hands, because his pallium had not yet arrived from Rome. (*Constitutional History*, vol. iii., p. 305.)

Fact 3.—In the very middle of the Anglo-Saxon period, Pope Hadrian I., about the year 787, at the petition of King Offa, sent Legates into England, who held Councils both in the North and in the South. The report of the Legates to the Pope, which bears the signiture of the Archbishops and Kings, declares that the instructions of the Pope have been received by all with "all humility of subjection, readiness of will, and promises of obedience." (Haddan and Stubbs, *Ecc. Councils*, iii. 448.)

Moreover, the same Pope, at the petition of the same King, solemnly erected the See of Lichfield into an Archbishopric, withdrew five sees from the jurisdiction of Canterbury, formed them into a new and independent province, and invested the new Archbishop of Lichfield with the pallium. Here we have the plain exercise of the highest substantive act of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. In 802, King Kenulph of Mercia wrote to Pope Leo III. begging him to restore the former condition of things, and abolish the third Province. His letter is an open profession of obedience "I embrace you with all the strength of obedience." The Pope issued an authoritative decree, reducing Lichfield to its former rank, and restoring the five sees to the jurisdiction of Canterbury; and this Apostolic judgment was solemnly received and proclaimed by Archbishop Etheleard in the Council of Clovesho, 803. (Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, iii. 541.)

Thus both in the making and unmaking of an English Archbishopric, the Holy See exercised publicly and plainly the highest form of jurisdiction, and received the fullest recognition of the English Kings and Bishops. (N.B. This took place in 787 and 803. The Forged Decretals did not see the light before 829.)

Fact 4.—For centuries before the Reformation, the Archbishops of Canterbury at their consecration, and at their investiture with the pallium, took publicly before the representatives of the Church and the nation and of the Papal Commissioners a solemn oath of obedience and allegiance to the Pope. In this oath they swore to "defend the Roman Papacy against all men," and to obey the commands of the Apostolic See "with their whole strength" and to "cause them to be obeyed by others." (The copy of the oath is in Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. vi., p. 80: edit. 1741.)

Fact 5.—In public documents and letters, the Primates of the English Church constantly declared themselves to be the "Legates of the Apostolic See." They avowed that their precedence over York and their Primatial jurisdiction over suffragans was founded on decrees and grants of the Roman Pontiffs.*

Fact 6.—The Primates and bishops of the English Church in their letters to the Pope constantly begin by making a declaration of "reverence" and "subjection" and "obedience." "Most blessed Father, only supreme and indubitable Pontiff, Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, kissing most devoutly your blessed feet with all promptitude of service and obedience" is the fairly explicit formula used by Archbishop Chicheley to Pope Martin V. in 1426.†

Fact 7.—In the pre-Reformation Church no English bishop was consecrated or recognised until his appointment was confirmed by the Pope, either indirectly through the Archbishop, who was himself the delegate and confirmed of the Pope, or directly by receiving his appointment by Bulls of Provision from the Holy See. For centuries before the Reformation the vast majority of English bishops were appointed directly by the Pope: and such provisions, embodying as they did the highest exercise of Papal authority ("*ex plenitudine Apostolicæ potestatis*," they were styled in the Royal writs), far from

* See Letter of Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury in 1070, in Wilkins' *Concilia*, vol, i., 326.

† Wilkins' *Concilia*, iii., p. 476.

being practically opposed by the English Church or nation, were, on the contrary, eagerly solicited both by the English Kings, the Privy Council, and by the bishops themselves. Thus the Statute of Provisors* supposed to exclude this direct confirmation was so utterly disregraded by the English Crown and the English Church that the number of appointments made by direct Papal provision was vastly greater after the passing of the Statute than before it.

Moreover, the Statute never received the assent of the Lords Spiritual. The Primates in the name of the English Church formally recorded their solemn protest against it, or any restriction of the authority of the Holy See. (*Rolls of Parliament*, iii. 264.) Convocation repeatedly petitioned for its repeal. (Stubbs, *Const. History*, iii. 340.)

Fact 8.—For centuries before the Reformation, English bishops at their consecration took a solemn and public oath of allegiance and obedience to the Pope, according to the tenour of that taken by the Primate "I will be faithful and obedient to Blessed Peter and to the Roman Church, and to my Lord the Pope N. . .,so help me God and these God's Holy Gospels."

Fact 9.—In the government of the English Church, all important cases of trial—*causæ majores*—were referred by the Archbishop and bishops to the judgment of the Pope as the Supreme Court of Appeal. "Between 1215 and 1264, there were not fewer than thirty disputed elections carried to Rome for decision." † Not less than seven appeals as to elections went to Rome from the chapters of the diocese of Lichfield and Coventry. Hugh Oldham, Bishop of Exeter in 1505, with several other English bishops, joined in more than one appeal to the "Holy Apostolic See,"

* When the statute was confirmed in 1391, the two Archbishops caused to be entered on the rolls of parliament their public protest against it, as an infringement of the Papal prerogative. This protest may he seen in the *Rolls of Parliament*, vol. iii., p. 264.

† Stubbs, *Constit. Hist.*, vol. iii., p. 315.

which is described in his *Register* as the "sole refuge of the oppressed." *

Fact 10.—Throughout all England, in every cathedral, collegiate, and parish church, the Mass was said and the sacraments administered according to the Latin and Roman rite, adapted to the local uses, such as Sarum, York, Hereford, and Bangor. In the canon of every Mass (which is verbally the same as that which is said at the present day in all Roman Catholic Churches) there was a prayer for "our Pope." Moreover, on every Sunday and feast day, in the parish churches throughout the land, the people prayed for the Pope in the "Bidding Prayer." ("Ye shal praye for the state of al holy churche and for our holy fader the Pope, with all his college of cardinals.") See preface to *Exeter Cathedral.*

The same was the public practice of the English nation in Anglo-Saxon times. ("Witan we gebidden for urne Papan on Rome, for urne Cyning, for ne Arceb, for ne ealdor man," &c. In Codex of the Gospel Book preserved at York Cathedral.)

Moreover Peter's Pence, or "Rome-fee," a contribution from the English people to the Pope, was paid by this country even from Anglo-Saxon times.†

Fact 11.—The jurisdiction of the Pope and the relation of the English Church to the See of Rome, was clearly and officially recognised by the English Church itself. Thus, in the solemn Declaration of Faith drawn up by Archbishop Arundel in 1413, with the approval of the English bishops and the English clergy in convocation assembled, to be used as a test against the Lollards, we find the following clear statement of what the English Church believed concerning the Pope:—"Christ ordeyned Saint Peter the Apostell to be His Vicar here on erthe whos See is the Church of Rome; ordeyning and graunting the same power that He gaf to Peter shoulde succeede to all Peter's succes-

* Oldham's *Register*, fol. 44.

† "Tithe we enjoin to every Christian man and Rome Fee."—*Laws of Edmund*, Thorpe, vol. i., 244. "And let God's dues be willingly paid every year, Rome Fee at St. Peter's Mass." *Laws of Canute*, Kemble, vol. ii., p. 547.

sours, the which we now callyn Popes of Rome, by whos power in churches particular special be ordeyned prelates, as archbysshopes, bysshopes, curates, and other degrees, to whom all Cristen men ought to obey after the lawes of the Church of Rome." *

Fact 12.—The English Church and the English nation repeatedly and cordially declared their devotion and allegiance to the Church of Rome. In 1245, owing to the monetary exactions of the Roman Curia, the relations between England and the Pope were strained to the uttermost. Yet in the very worst of the crisis the English Primate and the bishops assembled at Westminster declared to Pope Innocent that "the said kingdom [of England] was specially devoted to the Most Holy Roman Church." The clergy of England on the same occasion wrote to the Pope affirming the "English Church" to be "a special member of the Most Holy Church of Rome," and declaring themselves to be "faithful and devoted sons of the Most Holy Roman Church." The nobles of England had already in 1245 sent an address of remonstrance to the Pope, which begins with the protestation, "Our Mother, the Roman Church, we love and cherish with all our hearts as our duty it is, and we seek her honour, increase, and welfare with all the affection of which we are capable." They speak of the English King as "the most dear son of the Roman Church."† I take it that the above is the language of Roman Catholics. If these English kings, bishops and clergy themselves affirm that they are "faithful sons" and "special members of the Church of Rome," must we believe certain Anglican lecturers when they say that they were not?

The above are twelve main facts very plainly stamped on the face of English history, and irremovably interwoven in the fibre of the national life of England in pre-Reformation times. They are twelve facts which every student of English Church history may be rightly

* This test-declaration may be seen in the record of Convocation in Wilkins' *Concilia*, vol. iii., p. 355.

† Matthew Paris, 902 and 930, edit. 1571.

supposed to have at his finger's ends. A Church whose doctrine was absolutely one with that of the Church of Rome; whose Primates wore the pallium or insignia of Roman vicars, and styled themselves Legates of the Roman See; whose bishops and Primates held their Sees by appointment from the Pope, and swore oaths of allegiance and obedience to the Pope; whose clergy and people prayed in every Mass for the Pope (even before the King), protesting even in the most trying moment that they were "faithful and devoted sons of the Holy Roman Church;" and, finally, a Church which is declared by its own bishops to be "a special member of the Church of Rome," and which paid generous tribute for centuries to the Roman See, appears to us to be just nothing at all if not Roman Catholic. It is utterly irrelevant to meet these facts by the plea that the Pope's Jurisdiction was "unwarranted" or "founded on forged decretals." Warranted or unwarranted, these facts prove that Papal Supremacy was *recognised* by the English Church, and that suffices to make it Roman Catholic. Moreover, Facts 1 and 2 show that the jurisdiction of the Pope in its highest form was exercised and recognised in England long before the Forged Decretals came into existence. No amount of special pleading can drown the voice of History.

J. MOYES.

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ST. PETER CLAVER

OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS

(1580–1654)

BY THE REV. FATHER SOLA OF THE SAME SOCIETY

I. THE PREPARATION

THE city of Cartagena, on the northern shore of South America, was, during the 17th century, the central point of the struggle in which the nations of Europe were engaged for the wealth of the new world. Its enormous harbour made it the market for all the treasures of Mexico, Peru, Potosi, and the Islands of the Western Indies, and it became the scene of the most hideous traffic that ever disgraced the name of man and cried to heaven for vengeance. But in the midst of the wickedness of Cartagena God raised up a witness to Himself. Where all was avarice, corruption, greed, and cruelty, a Saint was found, who was for forty years the visible sign of God's protecting Providence to hundreds of thousands of the most abject, the most abandoned of His creatures; whose voice was the only one to pierce through that Babel of the world's loud cries, and bring a message of peace and pardon to their souls.

Peter Claver, "the slave of the slaves for ever," as he named himself in the formula of his religious profession, was born at Verdu near Barcelona, in Spain, in June of the year 1580. The child, consecrated from his birth to God by his good parents, was protected from his earliest days by the blessing of grace, and passed his first happy years in the simple village life. As his character developed it showed only fresh beauty to the admiring eyes of his father and mother; who, seeing something of the promise of the gifts with which he was endowed, resolved to carry out the offering they had made, and send him to pursue his studies with a view to the priesthood. He went first to the neighbouring cathedral city of Solsona, where one of his uncles was a canon, and passed many years under the tutelage of

this holy priest, laying a solid foundation of early education and advancing daily in virtue. He returned frequently to Verdu, both giving and receiving an equal amount of pleasure in these visits. It was noted that after his First Communion a change was visible in his whole deportment, a deepening of the recollection that always distinguished him, a more careful avoidance of useless conversations and games. It was clear to all that he was marked out for God, and his parents yielded to the desire of the canon of Solsona by sending him to Barcelona, at that time in much resort by scholars, where the boy would have every advantage in cultivating his many gifts. It was here that he learnt to know the Society of Jesus, and his heart was soon captivated by the holy examples offered by the lives of the Fathers at the College of Belen in that city, where at this time a great effort was being made by them to introduce the practice of frequent communion, then unusual in the country. He joined the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin, and was thus initiated into the higher paths of the spiritual life, particularly by the practice of mortification, penance, works of mercy, and prayer. His vocation to a religious life remained undecided in his heart, until minor orders were conferred upon him by the Bishop. He felt a desire to join the Society, and never so strongly as when praying in the Jesuits' church before a picture into which the figures of St. Ignatius (then not fifty years dead) and some of the first Fathers of the Society were introduced; but the desire remained a secret between himself and God, and a deep sense of his unworthiness prevented him from offering himself for admission. At the ceremony, however, with the grace of minor orders came a flood of heavenly light into his soul that banished hesitation. After fervent prayer he made known to the Rector his wish to join the Society, and in August, 1602, entered the noviceship at Tarragona.

No incidents are recorded of Peter's noviceship that single him out from the others who were with him during the two years he passed at Tarragona. He was a perfect novice, and therefore the most obedient, the most laborious, the humblest, and the most hidden. The lessons he learnt at Tarragona were the foundation of all his future life. Submissive, faithful, lowly was he then; and the worn-out apostle, dying after years of arduous work, was only more complete in his submission, more minute in his fidelity, more abject in his lowliness.

He kept a little book in which he noted sometimes the

lights received in prayer. Amongst other entries occur the following four rules to be kept by a novice of the Society.

"First: to seek God in all things, and try to find Him in all.

"Second: to employ all one's strength in attaining the most perfect obedience, interior and exterior, subjecting the will and judgment to Superiors as to Christ our Lord Himself.

"Third: to do all for the greater glory of God.

"Fourth: to seek nothing in this world but what Christ our Lord sought there. As He came on earth to save souls and died for them on the cross, we should try to gain them for Him, for this joyfully offering ourselves to any labour and to death itself; receiving with contentment and joy of heart for the love of Christ any insult that may be offered us, and desiring that they may be many, yet so that we give no cause for them on our part and that there be no offence to God."

Towards the end of his noviceship, Peter, according to the usual custom of the Society of Jesus, was to make some practical proof of the love of poverty, humility, and suffering he had been seeking to acquire, by setting out with a companion on a pilgrimage. They were to go unprovided with money or any provision for the journey, begging their way and lodging at nightfall in the hospitals. The shrine that fell to Peter Claver's lot as the object of his pilgrimage was that of Our Lady of Montserrat.

This sanctuary is situated on a mountain about 4000 feet in height, which, with jagged peaks, towers over the city and port of Barcelona. It has since the 9th century been a place of pilgrimage and veneration, since it was one of the chosen sites miraculously designated by the Mother of God as a spot on which she desired to be honoured. It is indeed a holy mountain; for its rugged and "serrated" sides are studded with hermitages, the abodes of prayer and penance, and half way up stands the monastery of Benedictine monks and the church containing the miraculous statue. It had another attraction in Peter Claver's eyes as in those of all pilgrims since the days of St. Ignatius: for it was here that the saint, before entering on his life-long campaign against her enemies, kept his vigil as Our Lady's knight before her altar. Two or three days were spent at this shrine by Peter Claver, and to the end of his life he would recall even with tears of joy the happiness that his visit gave him, and the graces obtained for him at Montserrat by Our Blessed Lady.

He made his vows on the 8th of August, 1604. "I consecrate myself to God till death," he wrote at that time, "looking on myself henceforth as a slave whose whole office lies in being at the service of his master, and working with all my soul, body and mind to please and satisfy Him in all and by all." Shortly afterwards he went to the Jesuit Seminary at Gerona, where he soon so distinguished himself by his abilities as to be employed as a professor. The following year he went to Majorca. His superiors sent him thither to pursue his course of philosophy; but God, whilst endorsing their wishes in this respect, had other designs upon this chosen servant.

Saint Alphonsus Rodriguez,* lay brother and porter at the College of Montexion at Palma, in Majorca, was now drawing towards the close of his life of heroic virtue. He received from God the glorious task of moulding to its great work the heart of the Apostle of the Negroes. Peter Claver's soul, when the young scholastic arrived at Majorca, was a rich soil perfectly prepared to receive the seeds of grace that were implanted in it by his holy master; and the joy of the aged saint, on meeting with the disciple who was to receive the inheritance of his spiritual wealth, was very great. The heart of Alphonsus was on fire with apostolic zeal, but age and its infirmities were weighing on him, and his work in this world was almost done. What a reward for his long years of humble patience to be able to enkindle this consuming fire in a young and ardent heart; to inspire with this unquenchable thirst for souls one whose life was still before him, to awaken to a high vocation a courage and energies capable of any work! The future was known to Rodriguez, and Peter, model as he was of every virtue, was in his eyes crowned with a halo invisible to all but him—a halo of heroic sacrifice, of abnegation carried to its utmost length, of devotion to a life of toil, of labour and of suffering that made him a living image of his crucified Redeemer.

Peter Claver, to whom the renown of the sanctity of Alphonsus was well known, had rejoiced exceedingly at finding that his lot was cast for a while under the same roof: and he sought and obtained permission to have every day a quarter of an hour's talk with him. He soon found that the great things said of Alphonsus were far surpassed by the reality; and Alphonsus on his side treated his young disciple as an equal and a friend.

* See his Life, issued in the same series as the present.

These interviews not only trained Peter and taught him many things then, but afforded food for his soul and light for his mind throughout his whole after-life. He noted down most carefully the thoughts and teaching of Alphonsus, adding even sometimes the date of the day when the words were said; and the little books in which these notes were made he carried with him everywhere and through everything, often referring to them for strength and renewal of spirit, and bequeathing them as treasures on his death-bed to those by whom he knew they would be valued.

Space does not allow of our reproducing here these precious notes, which contain so much of the doctrine of St. Alphonsus. Their spirit is that which characterizes the sanctity of their author—the absolute and sovereign dominion of God over us on the one hand, and the humility, submission, and self-conquest that are necessary on our side, that we may not in any way be wanting in the worship we owe to our Creator. This fundamental thought of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius is the principle of all Christian as well as of all spiritual life. It makes men saints, apostles, missionaries, martyrs, and the more clearly and forcibly it takes possession of the mind the more powerfully it operates upon the will. The plenitude of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in the heart and soul of Alphonsus gave his words a power that seemed wellnigh sacramental, so marvellously did they operate in the souls of his hearers. He seemed to transmit not only the thought, but its very effect in his own soul, and thus through his words he communicated the reflection of the celestial favours he himself received. His influence upon a soul already so holy as that of Peter Claver cannot be exaggerated; and our Saint himself acknowledged it by the devotion, veneration, and love he always felt for him whom he never spoke of otherwise than as his "holy master."

The will of God with regard to Peter Claver was revealed to Alphonsus, and with all the assurance thus obtained he spoke to him of the Indies—the souls perishing, the harvest plentiful, the labourers so few, the toil so great, how abundant the sufferings and the reward how overflowing. Every word he uttered found an echo in Peter's soul, and awakened an intense longing to offer himself for the mission: a longing which his humility and sense of his own worthlessness might have kept latent, had

it not been brought to light by the assurance of Alphonsus that it was God's will for him to go in search of these perishing souls, redeemed by the Blood of Christ. He was then just at the end of his course of philosophy, which he finished with great applause by being selected out of all the students to defend a public thesis—a task of which he acquitted himself to the admiration of all. Before leaving Majorca he wrote to the Provincial offering himself for the foreign missions. The answer postponed any decision on the question until he should have come to Barcelona, where he was to begin the study of theology.

Two years of waiting followed, during which time his desire for the missions increased in intensity, and he constantly renewed his request to be sent. In 1609 an order came from the Father-General of the Society of Jesus, Father Claudius Acquaviva, that from each province in Spain a missionary should be sent to recruit the recently-founded province in the New World. St. Peter Claver was selected for the province of Arragon; and in April, 1610, he set out with his companions from the port of Seville.

Two incidents in connection with his departure show how far he carried his spirit of detachment from the world. Although his parents were still living within a few leagues of Barcelona, when he passed through that city he neither warned them of his coming, nor took leave of them.

When the shores of Spain vanished from the gaze of those on the deck of the sailing-vessel that took them westward across the ocean, all memory of the land of his birth seemed to fade from the mind and heart of Peter Claver. He never spoke of the past, except some incidents of his religious life, and never asked for news.

As often happens in life, St. Peter's work on his first arrival in the New World was very different from what he anticipated. He was not yet ordained, for at Seville, having deep in his heart the desire of passing his life in the Society as a lay-brother, he had besought and obtained a postponement of ordination, which was to have been there conferred upon him.

On his arrival at Cartagena he was sent to the city of Santa Fé de Bogotà to finish his course of studies, whilst his companions, who were priests, began at once their missionary labours.

Labour, however, was not wanting to Peter Claver. The Jesuits' house at Santa Fé was scarcely founded,

and was wanting in everything. The studious solitude of Barcelona seemed very removed from this seminary where, over and above his studies, Claver was called on to perform the greater part of the domestic work of the house. The student of theology was likewise porter, sacristan, and cook. He was rejoiced at these offices, and he combined one with another and with his studies with extraordinary dexterity, hoping in his inmost heart that when his superiors saw his fitness for them they would allow him to continue them throughout his life. His success, however, in theology, under the very holy and distinguished professor, Father Antony Augustin, was so great that his superiors, filled with admiration for his virtues and talents, decided after his final examination, to admit him to profession. The professed Fathers in the Society of Jesus are of two grades. In the higher of them, to the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience taken by all, is added the vow of obedience to the Holy See. St. Peter Claver was deeply grieved at the honour conferred upon him when he was told that he was to belong to the higher grade. He refused as far as in him lay, but was obliged to submit. His profession took place in 1622; and to the four vows he added a fifth, "to devote himself for ever to the salvation of the negroes." His third year of noviceship was passed in the newly-founded noviciate of the Society at Tunja; and at its close he returned to Cartagena, where he soon received the order to begin his retreat before his ordination. He received the priesthood in March, 1616.

Hitherto Peter Claver had but received. The formation the Society gives her sons is long; but it was complete at last, and henceforward his only thought was what he could give. The retreat which he had just made marked a change in his life that might be compared to that from dawn to noon. Holy as his life had been, henceforth it was heroic, since every action was stamped with a supernatural fortitude that enabled him to exercise a charity that may well be called divine. His life is written in deeds, not words. As we follow him through his ministry we must not expect to hear him speak. His vocation was not that of preacher or reformer. He was a living witness to God's mercy in the midst of unequalled misery, a vindication of His Providence in the face of man's oppression, a channel of His grace to hundreds of thousands of abandoned souls, an example of what, in Father Faber's words, one man can accomplish who has received "by nature an enthusiastic,

loving heart, and from grace the magnificent gift of living solely and entirely for God."

II. THE APOSTOLATE

1622. At the time when St. Peter was sent to the Jesuits' College at Cartagena, that part was the Liverpool of South America. Every galleon of the then greatest kingdom in the world was forced by a law of the monarchs of Spain to touch there on their outward voyage to the Western Hemisphere. The quays of that tropical city were crowded by the sailors and merchants, the sea captains and soldiers of Spain—Italians, Flemings, Spaniards; the white man, the black, the copper-coloured, all full of work and athirst for gold and pleasure. Almost every vessel that came into the harbour had a terrible but precious cargo—a living freight, or rather a dying one—for in the tomb-like hold, in the deep, dark, and fetid prison, through the long passage in the torrid heat, huddled and crushed together, were packed some eight or nine hundred men, women, and children, a reeking mass of corrupting humanity.

Horrors untold had they gone through in the cruel slave-hunt, and then in the terrible march down to the African coast, leaving the prisoners starved and worn out, ill-prepared for a yet more terrible voyage. And when at length they are brought on shore, covered with open wounds and alive with vermin, they meet with as little pity from the white man who buys them, as from the slave-catchers who had bartered them for beads and gewgaws. With their limbs almost powerless from long confinement they are dragged to the slave market to be sold again like beasts of burden. Ten or twelve thousand negroes were landed yearly at Cartagena, to be transported to the West Indian Isles or to the mines of Peru.

It was to these poor wretches that St. Peter Claver for nearly forty years devoted his life. He served his apprenticeship in his heroic work under Father Alphonso de Sandoval, a most holy and zealous Jesuit, whose health had been miraculously restored to him by St. Ignatius that he might labour for the salvation of the negroes, and who for many years endeavoured with active and tender charity to lighten their load of misery, and above all, to save their souls. In seven years he is said to have baptized more than thirty thousand. At the time of Peter Claver's arrival in Cartagena, soon after his ordination, an order had just

arrived from Father Mutius Vitelleschi, General of the Society, that some other Jesuits should be named to work with him, that his admirable methods of dealing with the negroes should be perpetuated. Peter Claver volunteered for this. He was accepted, and thus began his life-long work. After a year spent in labouring under Father de Sandoval the latter was called elsewhere, and the whole devolved upon Father Claver, the spirit of the master descending upon him fourfold.

His love for the negroes soon became so well known in Cartagena that upon the arrival of a slave ship the principal authorities would vie with one another in the endeavour to be the first to bring him the news, knowing that the reward was nine Masses. They loved also to see the effect upon him: his pale face lighted up with pleasure, his eyes sparkled; he grew young again. He first knelt to thank God for having brought them safely to land, and then busied himself with preparations. He enquired of what race they were that he might get the right interpreters; and then he provided what he called the "bait," by which they might be caught, for he always said they must be spoken to first by the hand with gifts. Provided with a large store of refreshing drinks, fruit, preserves, lemons, brandy, and tobacco, he would go down to the quay and wait the first moment when it would be possible to go on board. The negroes who survived the horrors of the passage were almost crazed by its suffering. They thought that fresh atrocities awaited them, and were prepared for any cruelty. Claver appeared to these besotted or ferocious natures as an angel of charity, whose greeting was the first to meet them on this foreign shore. There was no mistaking the genuine love that shone in Father Claver's eyes, as he clasped them in his arms and ministered so tenderly to their wants. They recognized it, and when they heard his assurances by the mouth of those of their own nation whom he brought with him, that no harm was meant them, and that he would himself be their protector, friend, and father, they listened as if spell-bound. He then distributed the provisions, and next enquired whether any children had been born during the voyage, and whether there were any at the point of death. The children he baptized, and if the sick were already Christians he confessed and prepared them for death, if not Christians he instructed and baptized them; many, as it seemed, only waited for this grace to die. He remained a long time

with those who were ill, feeding them with his own hands, paying them every attention that their extreme need and his own charity could suggest, winning their hearts and those of the bystanders, who almost envied the sick when they saw how tenderly Father Claver cared for them.

When the day came for the disembarkation of the negroes, Peter Claver was again at the quay with interpreters and provisions as before. As soon as the poor creatures descried him they scrambled up the masts and rigging to get a better sight of him, clapping their hands by way of salute. He would hold out his hand to them to help them to jump down, would receive them in his arms and give them the kiss of peace. He had provided low carts for the sick and he saw to their being conveyed to these, and thus when all was ready he took them to their dwellings. These, alas! were scarcely better than the hold of the ship they had quitted, but at least they were not confined there for so long.

Early next morning Father Claver, after saying Mass, set out in his threadbare cassock, a bronze crucifix upon his breast, carrying two bags slung across his back, and in his hand a staff surmounted by a cross. One of the bags contained a surplice, a stole, holy oils, rosaries, etc. The other, biscuits, fruit, brandy, scented water, and other comforts or refreshments for the sick. Though thus laden he walked so quickly that his companion and the interpreters could scarcely keep pace with him. His first enquiries were for the sick, and when he had done all he could for them he looked after the rest.

Having assembled them all in a large court-yard, he erected an altar on which he placed pictures fitted to give their dull minds some idea of the truths he was about to teach them. The central and most conspicuous represented the Crucifixion; streams of blood ran from the five wounds and were collected in a precious vase by a priest who was about to baptize therefrom a negro who awaited that grace upon his knees in an attitude of deep devotion. Cardinals and kings in stately robes assisted at the ceremony. On one side of this group were shown, all shining in light, the negroes who had received baptism; on the other, hideous and deformed, those who had rejected it.

Before beginning his Catechism he took each negro separately to examine whether he had been baptized. This he was obliged to do quite privately, because he found by experience that if they could hear one another's answers

they would follow like sheep and all give the same reply. The result of this examination was to divide the negroes into three classes: those who had been baptized, those who had not, and those whose baptism was doubtful; he distinguished them by medals which he put around their neck.

He then commenced the instruction. The negroes were ranged around, seated on benches he had himself provided for them. Father Claver, taking his cross in his hands, would kneel down in their midst, and prayed there silently for some minutes, his face lighted up with heavenly fire. Then raising his right hand he made very solemnly a large sign of the cross, saying at the same time the usual words. This action and the words he repeated several times, and then with his interpreters he went in turn to every negro, making everyone sign himself in the same way with the holy sign. He would give sweetmeats as a reward to those who did it well, and gently find fault with the others; nor would he ever pass on to another until the last had by frequent repetition learnt his lessons perfectly. From this beginning he led them on to acts of faith which in their turn gave rise to acts of hope, and these to acts of charity and contrition. His own example acted in a marvellous way upon their untaught minds, and they caught the reflection of his ardent faith and burning charity. He took advantage of these dispositions to rouse in them a hatred of idolatry and desire for baptism. "See, my children," he would say, "you must do like the serpent who shakes off his old skin that he may have another and far more beautiful one:" and to make his meaning clearer he would take between finger and thumb the skin of his hand as if he were going to tear it off. The poor slaves whose attention was completely riveted upon him, and who followed his minutest action, would then make use of the same signs to show they understood, and were ready to strip off their old idolatry.

But the deepest impression was made when, crucifix in hand, he spoke to them of the great love of God who thus died for them. His words were accompanied by such floods of tears of love and sorrow, that seeing them the negroes broke forth into sobs and lamentations and even cries of grief. He concluded always with an act of contrition usually in these words: "My Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of God, Thou art my father, my mother, and all my good. I love Thee with all my heart and am very sorry for having offended Thee; I love Thee dearly, dearly." Tears drowned his voice

in saying these words; the negroes wept with him, and thus ended the instruction for that day.

Shortly after, when other instructions of the same nature had prepared them sufficiently, a day was appointed for their baptism, and all possible solemnity was given to the ceremony. The number of baptisms thus administered cannot be known with certainty, but it probably exceeded four hundred thousand. It was a work always to be renewed, as relays of negroes succeeded one another without intermission during the forty years of Peter Claver's ministry.

The good Father was not satisfied with making Christians of the negroes; he would have them *good* Christians, and to effect this he followed them into all the details of their lives. It was remarked of him that he seemed to be everywhere at once, if not miraculously, at least by the incredible speed and fervour with which he went from one part of the city to the other, to visit the sick or instruct the ignorant. No one could keep up with him, and he was obliged to change his companion two or three times in the course of an afternoon. The climate of Cartagena is a cause of great suffering to its inhabitants, but scorching sun, drenching rain, and biting wind never had the power to deter Peter Claver from a single charitable visit. Night as well as day was devoted to this ministry. "The other Fathers," he would say, "work hard and need their rest. I who do nothing have no need of sleep;" and so when the bell for a sick call rang at night, for his nights were passed in prayer, he was always the first to answer it and obtain the task he coveted.

Negroes, even when in health, are repulsive on account of their natural odour and uncivilized habits, but when in illness they become intolerable. The acts of charity which Peter Claver performed for them are such that we can scarcely bear to bring them home to ourselves. Weak hearts sicken even at hearing of what the heroic self-conquest of this true lover of the cross performed for these poor outcast children of our common Father. No wonder that his charity was rewarded by the gift of miracles, and that at his prayer souls that had already left the body should return until they had received baptism or absolution, and their salvation was thus ensured. Three miracles of this kind are witnessed to, and innumerable cures were granted to his prayers. That we may learn how Peter Claver taught himself to overcome the natural loathing for what is nauseous, as strong in him as in other men, let

us take courage and follow him to one abode of misery, from which we may fancy what the rest were like. He was once called to the house of a rich trader to confess a negro who was covered all over with sores; the stench that they exhaled was so fetid that the sufferer was placed apart in an out-house. His very appearance was so horrible that no one dared to approach him, and strange to say, even Peter Claver, when he saw him, was seized with a repugnance that made him recoil with horror. The Father was followed, unknown to himself, by the master of the house, curious to witness the charity of which he had often heard. He saw the recoil of nature, but he saw also how it was met. Peter Claver withdrew a little, and gave himself a severe discipline. "Is this the way," he said to himself, "that you refuse to touch a brother redeemed by the Precious Blood? but you shall pay for it, and learn charity." Then he came back, and approaching the sick man upon his kness, devoutly and most tenderly kissed the loathsome sores and cleansed them with his tongue; he gave refreshments to the sufferer, heard his confession, remained a long time by his side, and left him full of consolation. When he came out, his face was very calm, and a grave and sweet serenity was remarked by all.

Sometimes when, with the sick, he required the assistance of others, and the foul atmosphere prevented them from being able to approach it, they found it changed into a sweet and refreshing air when no natural means could have effected the improvement. His cloak, which he used often to spread beneath the leprous and revolting sick, far from contracting any unpleasant smell, was fragrant with a perfume of sweet flowers. It was quite a common thing with him to apply his lips to and to lick the most infected sores. He saw Jesus Christ in all His suffering members, and treated Him in them with the tenderness he would have bestowed on the wounds of his Master.

His eyes were always on the negroes and their conduct; and his presence and even the mere mention of his name were a restraint to keep them within bounds. If their dances, which he allowed as long as they were not indecent, exceeded the limits of propriety, he was no longer the loving father but the avenger of God's law, and holding on high in one hand a crucifix, in the other a discipline, he would rain down a shower of blows on the dancers and musicians, who were glad to escape from them even with the loss of their instruments. These he took possession

of, and restored them only after an alms had been given to the poor of the hospital. He was always the strict guardian of their morals, and saw to their observance of the laws of God and of the Church.

It was not the negroes of Cartagena alone who were the objects of his care. Every year he undertook most laborious missions into the surrounding country, travelling with a negro interpreter whom he obeyed as his superior, deferring to him on all points and leaving to him the ordering of the journey. He baptized, heard confessions, preached from morning till night, travelling across desert wastes of country from one settlement to the other, until he returned to Cartagena worn to a skeleton from excessive toil, but only anxious to resume the labours he had been forced to abandon for a time in the city itself. Here, the poor in the hospitals, and especially the lepers, the prisoners, the soldiers, the merchants, all classes in short were in turn the objects of his zeal, for he was the apostle not only of the negroes but of all Cartagena. He made himself the peacemaker between enemies, he converted heretics; in short, wherever God's work was to be done at the cost of sacrifice, Peter Claver was there to do it with an energy, love, and devotedness that won over the most obdurate by the sweet persuasive force of sanctity. No day passed without the exercise of some heroic act of charity.

III. THE REWARD

Let us turn from the streets and squares, from the busy money-loving crowd, from the misery, the cupidity, and the worldliness of Cartagena, to follow its Apostle into his cell in the Jesuits' College of that city, to study for a little while his life as a religious and his life with God, thus tracing to its source all the charity and self-sacrifice we have been witnessing.

The College of Cartagena was poor, both in the means of subsistence and the number of its Fathers; but whilst existence there was a struggle that entailed unnumbered hardships upon its members, it was a school in which they were formed to no common measure of holiness. Peter Claver was at one time Minister in the College, that is, the second in command, and his duty therefore was to supply all the material wants of his brethren. At another time he had the charge of the formation of the lay-brother novices. Whatever his employment, he was always the servant of all;

and as for so long a time each day he required the presence of a companion and the lay-brothers were very few and very busy, he always made time for the one assigned him as companion, by doing a part of his work. Thus he was sometimes in the sacristy, at others in the kitchen or the lodge, but whatever the office he would always respectfully take off his hat before the brother in charge, and beg him to tell him what to do.

His cell was for a long time a mere closet, too dark to allow him to see to write in it. His bed was always the hide of an ox or a common mat, his pillow a block of wood. But poor as this bed was, he left it usually to sleep upon the bare floor. He would sometimes for months together have in his room one of his negro interpreters who was ill with a disease that made it almost intolerable to be near him, and Father Claver would nurse him there with the tenderness of a mother.

Let us follow him into his cell when, after the almost superhuman toil of the day, he is at length alone. We shall see him take out a crown of very sharp thorns and place it on his head, for this is his usual practice when alone. He always says his Office thus when in his room. The night is not for him a time of sleep, but of prayer and penance, and the sleep he took was but of two or three hours.

He was often absorbed the whole night long in contemplation so as to be unconscious even of the violent thunderstorms prevalent in that climate. His neighbour, Brother Gonzalez, under the influence of fear, would sometimes rush into Father Claver's room when the storm was very violent, and go close up to him for protection without distracting him for an instant from his intercourse with God. The rector used to make his confession to Father Claver, and for this purpose would occasionally go to his room at night. Opening the door gently, he often found him with his crown of thorns upon his head, a rope around his neck, and so absorbed in God that not to interrupt his prayer he would withdraw unobserved. He used to say he did not know when Father Claver's prayers were over, for at whatever hour he came to him he always found him so engaged.

Every Friday St. Peter Claver would leave his room in the dead of night with the crown of thorns upon his head, the rope around his neck, and a heavy cross upon his shoulders, and thus clothed in the likeness of Jesus Christ

he made a penitential pilgrimage throughout the house. He took the discipline every night three times to blood, once before he went to sleep, again at midnight, and a third time when the signal was given for the community to rise. The rough hair shirt he always wore was the only dressing he ever applied to those self-inflicted wounds.

Three times it happened that, the door being opened in the middle of the night, Father Claver was thus seen raised some height above the ground in the same attitude in which he had been kneeling in prayer: his eyes were fixed with intense love upon the crucifix he held in his hands, and he was surrounded by a soft, yet brilliant light. He remained for some hours in this position and then gently descended to the floor. The same unearthly radiance was often seen around his head when he was saying Mass, when visiting the hospitals, and when he was assisting criminals at their execution. It was so brilliant that no one could look on it without being dazzled.

The Passion of Our Lord was the strongest attraction of his soul, and he tried, as far as possible, that in imitation of his Lord no part of his body should be without suffering. To attain this, besides the austerities already spoken of, he bound his limbs about with horse-hair cords studded with iron points, and these he always wore. But if his penances were fearful the mortification of his senses was no less astonishing. During the fifty years he spent in religion he never allowed his eyes a single glance which was prompted by mere curiosity. The window of a cell he occupied for many years looked out upon the port, but he never opened it, nor looked out at what passed beneath. He never indulged himself with the fragrance of a flower and never tasted fruit. The guard he obtained over his senses was so great that he never made a movement to drive away mosquitoes or other stinging insects, but rather invited their approach. In his confessional they swarmed about him so that he was sometimes covered with blood from their stings. He would only laughingly say, if any one made a remark about it, that they were very useful, as they bled him without need of a lancet. He used similar devices to throw a veil over all his virtues.

Before the first Mass, often at three o'clock in the morning, Claver was already in his confessional, which he had chosen as the most inconvenient one in the Church, close to the door and exposed all day to sun or rain. He often remained in it so many hours that when the College gates

were closed at night he had to be carried almost fainting with exhaustion to his room. The negroes came to him in crowds, and whilst there were any of them to confess no one else had a chance of being heard. All the early hours of the morning he passed in his confessional, for it was his custom always to say the latest Mass.

He prepared for celebrating the Holy Sacrifice by first making his confession, which he did shedding abundant tears of sorrow; then whatever his occupations might be he spent a full half hour in prayer, and he never spoke to any one from that time till he had finished his thanksgiving. His devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, always most remarkable, was especially shown whilst he was saying Mass, when his whole appearance was so expressive of the fervour of his soul that all who assisted at it were penetrated with a like feeling.

Whenever he could, St. Peter Claver's great happiness was to take his meals with the beggars at the door. He would eat with them gladly out of the same dish, and when the meal was over would collect and wash the plates and cups, sweep up the crumbs, in fact make himself the slave of the poor as he was the slave of negroes. He never ate more at dinner than the amount those who fast take for their collation; scraps of bread collected from the tables, with a potato, were his ordinary food. One evening, whilst he was Minister of the house, entering the refectory for supper, he asked the cook to give him the contents of an earthen vessel containing some broth made of olives. It was brought to him, and having thrown in a morsel of bread he thanked the brother, saying it was excellent. The following evening he made the same request, and after this the cook's curiosity was excited, as it was so unusual for Father Claver to ask for or to praise his food. So he tasted the decoction, and was immediately seized with violent pains and sickness. He looked into the vessel and there he found the bodies of large spiders and other insects in a state of decomposition, and so he immediately threw away the remainder. The third evening the Father again enquired for his favourite dish, and when he heard its fate: "God's will be done," he said, "but there was no need to throw it away, for it was very good."

The time of the siesta, or afternoon rest, so needed in hot climates, he employed in teaching catechism to his interpreters and catechists, and his patience with these men was not one of the least marvellous of his virtues. During

recreation time, when with the community, he was always engaged in making rosaries for the negroes. His devotion to Our Blessed Lady was only second to that which he felt for her Divine Son, and he spared no pains and no opportunity to inculcate it upon all, especially upon children, whom he loved to train up in tender devotion to her whom he used most frequently to speak of as "Mother of fair love."

Two maxims which he had learned from Blessed Alphonsus Rodriguez were deeply engraved upon his heart, and firmly and consistently did he practise them. They were discovered amongst his writings after his death in these words:

First Maxim. "When I am persecuted or calumniated I have either deserved it or not. If I have, why do I complain? ought I not rather to correct my fault and seek pardon from God? If I have not deserved it, I should rejoice at it, and be grateful to God for this opportunity of suffering something for His love, and for the rest I must be silent."

Second Maxim. "When crosses or opposition come, why do I not imitate the ass? When he is ill-treated he is silent; when he is neglected, over-laden, starved, despised, he is still silent. Whatever is said of it, whatever is done to it, it is still silent and makes no complaint. So likewise should a true servant of God act and say with David: 'I am become like a beast of burden before Thee.'"

It seemed indeed to be the one aim of Peter Claver's life to try how low and despicable he could make himself appear before men. We will give one example to show how far his humility was carried when it was a question of taking correction. During Holy Week he saw in the Jesuits' church a lady whose dress befitted neither the season of penance nor the House of God, and was quite unbecoming a Christian woman. His zeal was enkindled, and he reproached her with the style of her dress and suggested that it was unsuited to the time, her condition, and her age. This last remark was more than she could stand, and she flew into a passion and gave way to such angry words that she attracted the attention of the sacristan, who began to take her part and blame the Father's indiscretion. A moment afterwards the Rector came up, and either because he could not otherwise appease the lady's anger, or because he really thought that Father Claver was in the wrong, reprimanded severely his imprudence and his allowing himself to be carried away by the impetuosity of his

zeal. Without one word to justify himself Father Claver knelt down before his Superior. He kissed his feet, asked pardon for the scandal which he had given, and begged that a penance proportioned to the fault might be imposed upon him. The lady was so surprised and so confused at what had occurred through her conduct, that she made a complete change in her way of life, and was henceforward as edifying as she had been the contrary.

Father Claver was in this, as in all other occasions, a living model of his own maxim on humility: "The man who is truly humble desires contempt, and without seeking to appear humble he tries to appear to deserve to be humbled."

But what was the reward that his Lord and Master bestowed upon his faithful followers? It was one that this true lover of the Cross would have chosen out of all others, the only one indeed that he deemed deserving of the name; the privilege of pressing closer to his Saviour crucified, of feeling more the pain He bore for us, of sharing more abundantly in His ignominies, His abandonment, His shame. It would be difficult to imagine a trial that would cut the Apostle of the Negroes more keenly to the heart than that of being forbidden to open for them by baptism the path of salvation; yet when a storm was raised against the Jesuits in Cartagena by their enemies, all its violence fell upon Peter Claver, and he was accused of re-baptizing those who had already received the sacrament. The accusation was quite unjustifiable, but the Visitor-General of the Society of Jesus forbade him in future to baptize, and the saint thought it better to submit in silence than to protest his innocence. He never asked to baptize until the order was withdrawn. There was a time when every one, even his superiors, seemed against him. Not only did his own children, the negroes, abuse his patience, but their masters encouraged them to treat him with insult, alleging that he made them lose their time. Although many of his religious brethren had the greatest veneration for his holiness, some of them were allowed to be blind to his merit, and not only made complaints of the additional labour caused by his zeal and charity, but made him responsible for any ignorance or mistakes on the part of negroes instructed by him. They bitterly reproached him and drew on him reprimands so public and so severe that it required a patience like his own to bear them meekly. Once a Provincial who was much irritated at hearing a

young slave spoken of as "Father Claver's negro," expressed his displeasure with much warmth and even bitterness. But the Father listened without making any reply, although he had no other connection with the pretended fault than that of having got the situation for the little negro in the house. Another superior, who was prejudiced against him, expressed contempt for his opinion, saying he was ignorant and did not even understand Latin. Untrue as the taunt was, he made no answer but to acknowledge his ignorance. "What does it matter," he said to some who were surprised at his serenity, "whether one is thought learned or ignorant? But it is very necessary to be humble and obedient." The last four years of his life were passed in almost total solitude and inaction. In 1650, when he was seventy years old, having until that age laboured with unremitting ardour, he was attacked by a very severe illness, and although he recovered, he never regained his strength. From that time he was confined almost entirely to his room, and for many months before the end could neither feed himself nor even rise from his bed. Although unable to say Mass from the palsy that shook his frame, he still made his confession daily and dragged himself or was carried to the church to hear Mass and receive Communion, and as long as it was possible he continued to hear confessions.

As his weakness increased his patience was more and more exercised. The plague had ravaged Cartagena and many Jesuits had succumbed to it; those who survived were overburdened with work and were quite unable to give Father Claver the attention they would have desired. He was confided to the care of some clumsy negroes, especially of a rough and awkward boy whose attendance caused him every kind of suffering and made his life a martyrdom. Sometimes the servant neglected to bring him either food or drink for days together. His room was left unswept for weeks so as to become uninhabitable, and to this negative unkindness was added the positive barbarity of blows and savage treatment. Yet Father Claver never complained; no shade came over the calm tranquillity of his expression. "My sins," he used to say, "deserve infinitely more." Still his tender conscience reproached him with feelings that human nature must needs experience, though no expression of them was ever allowed. "My impatience during my illness," he once said, "has robbed me of whatever merit I had gained." Sometimes he would express his sorrow that the boy would not help him to rise when he wanted to go

to Mass or to visit the Blessed Sacrament. The efforts he made to do so unassisted caused him many a fall. The noise was overheard by the Brother in the sacristy below, and brought him to his aid. But finding that this Brother in helping him to dress treated him too respectfully and considerately, he would dismiss him with many thanks and call for the negro, whose rough usage was far more to his mind.

Two great consolations came to lighten the burden of these painful years of weary helplessness. One was the arrival of Father de Fariña, who was sent by the King of Spain to succeed him in the work of baptizing the negroes. "What!" he cried, "come to baptize the negroes! that is good news," and his face beamed with joy, as he struck his stick upon the floor. He rose at once and dragged himself to the room the Father occupied, knelt before him and kissed his feet, congratulating him on his employment. When Father de Fariña learnt that the holy old man before him was no other than Father Claver, he felt their places should be reversed; and he in turn fell at the feet of the servant of God, protesting that he should always look upon him as his master.

The other consolation was the printed life of Saint Alphonsus Rodriguez, which reached him eight months before his death and was a great delight to him, recalling as it did so many memories of his holy master, and ensuring that the veneration he himself felt for the saintly lay-brother would be widely propagated.

An order arrived from Spain to pull down the Jesuit college, but Father Claver received a distinct knowledge from God, that before this happened, he himself should be safe in the eternal home not made with hands. The demolition was to begin at once, and there seemed no immediate prospect of Father Claver's death. Yet he spoke of it as near at hand, and begged that he might be buried by his confessional near the church door and at the feet of his dear negroes—a request which, however, was not granted. On Sunday, Sept. 6th, 1654, he was assisted for the last time to the church, by two negroes, and after Communion returned in the same way to his room. As he passed the sacristy he said to the Brother: "I am going to die, do you want anything for the next life!" "That your reverence may recommend me with this house and city to God," was the reply. Father Claver passed the remainder of the day in close converse with God, and towards evening

was attacked by a violent fever that seemed to be rather the effect of his very ardent love acting on his weakened constitution than a natural malady. During the night unconsciousness came on, and the Sacrament of Extreme Unction was administered early the next morning, but the holy Father never spoke again and gave no sign of consciousness. His blessed soul, thus purified by suffering, passed to its eternal and most glorious reward on the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin.

Strange to say, no sooner was he dead than a fever of enthusiasm seized upon the city to do honour and to reverence as a saint the man who during his long sickness had lain abandoned by nearly all. The college was literally besieged by crowds who came to venerate his remains, and through the streets the children went crying loudly, "the Saint is dead, the Saint is dead!" Above all, his own negroes came from all quarters of the city and its neighbourhood to testify their love and gratitude, and the authorities outdid each other in public and substantial expressions of esteem. Honour was in truth his due, for he was a conqueror indeed. He gained innumerable souls for God and heaven, and he was a victor in that hardest and most obstinate of fights, the struggle against self-love, self-interest, and self-will. No wonder that when a palm branch was placed upon his body after death, the dead stiff fingers should unclose, as they were seen to do, and grasp a symbol to which he had so true a right.

There was no controlling the crowds who thronged into the Jesuits' church from the time the holy body was laid out there. All day they surged to and fro in the endeavour to approach near the remains and kiss the hands and feet that had worked so many miracles of love. But towards evening, when the negroes and the poorer classes freed from their work came to add to the crowd, and insisted upon looking once again upon the father they had lost, the Jesuits unclasped the hands, and removing the palm branch and the chalice, extended the arms in the form of a cross that the hands might the more easily be reached.

As night approached and the crowd continued to increase, the city guard was sent to defend the body, and the Augustinians replaced the Jesuits who were worn out with their struggle against the people. An effort to cover the body with a pall was entirely frustrated by the crowd, and when on the following morning the moment came for removing it to the tomb prepared in the wall of the church,

it was necessary to employ the device of distributing relics of the saint at the church door, to make it possible for the removal to be accomplished.

Three magnificent funeral services, with panegyrics, were celebrated with all possible pomp; the last of these was peculiarly touching as it was a spontaneous expression of the gratitude of the negroes. They assisted at it most solemnly, arranged according to their different nationalities, and spared nothing that could add to its pomp.

Multitudes of miraculous cures attested the sanctity of the servant of God, but space allows only one or two to be mentioned here. St. Peter's spiritual daughter Dona Isabella de Betancour was suffering from a disease of the eyes that prevented her, in spite of her great wish to see the saint once more, from venturing out the day following his death. Her mother, however, full of faith in his powerful intercession, persuaded her to go. Dona Isabella touched her eyes with his holy hand and the ophthalmia was instantly cured.

Bartholomew Sanchez was lying sick unto death at the hospital of St. Sebastian. His brother who was nursing him, through great veneration for St. Peter Claver, left the hospital to assist at the funeral. On his return he gave Bartholomew a little sprig of rosemary which he had taken from the bier, telling him to recommend himself to Father Claver who was able to cure him at once. Bartholomew, full of faith, put the rosemary to his mouth, and when his brother, alarmed at seeing him about to eat it, exclaimed against his imprudence, he replied: "It comes from a saint; it cannot hurt me." When he had eaten it, he said it tasted very sweet and not at all like rosemary. Then he fell asleep and awoke quite well. The miracles continued in such constant succession and Father Claver's reputation for sanctity was so universal, that three years after his death juridical informations were taken for his canonization. They continued for three years, during which the facts related in his life were deposed to on oath by witnesses worthy of credit. These informations were then sent to Rome, and in 1747, Benedict XIV. decreed the heroic character of the virtues of the servant of God, and declared him venerable.

The beatification of our saint was the first which was celebrated in the pontificate of Pius IX. It took place with all possible solemnity and splendour on Sept. 21st, 1851. His canonization was reserved to add to the lustre

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